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THE GOLD FIEND:

—OR,—

SHADOWS ON THE HEARTH-STONE.

A Story of Boston and New York.

BY FRANCIS A. DURIVAGE.

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MOUNTEBANK'S STORY.

Mrs. Norman entered her drawing-room with a charming air of frankness and cordiality, and smiling upon her visitor with an expression that none knew better how to render fascinating, extended her hand, and said:

"My young benefactor, I do not know how to thank you for this kind visit. You lately laid me under an obligation that I can never cancel, and if my life were prolonged to the utmost limit, I am sure I could never do enough to show my gratitude."

Milford blushed as he disclaimed all merit in the service he had rendered. He then asked the lady if she had perfectly recovered from the effects of the accident.

"Perfectly, I thank you. Indeed, I fancy I feel better than ever—as if I had derived a new stock of vitality from the very imminence of losing all."

After a casual rejoinder, Milford said with some embarrassment:

"I have come, madam, on a begging errand."

"Indeed, sir! Well, you have not gone astray!" said the widow. "I shall be most happy to do anything in my power to serve you. Indeed, I am almost selfish enough to be rather glad that you are in a little—a very little distressed, (I don't want you to suffer too much), because it gives me the opportunity of aiding you. It is perhaps a feeling of this sort that justifies Rochefoucauld's saying, that there is something in the distresses of our best friends that is not altogether unpleasant to us."

"It is not for myself that I seek aid, madam," replied Milford, with a slight blush. "I come as the advocate of another's cause. I am enabled to make my own way in the world, but unfortunately, at present, not able to indulge in the luxury of assisting others."

He then related Irene's accident. He told about the poverty of her father—the prospect of a long and expensive illness, and such other circumstances as occurred to him; and the proud and lovely listener, whose heart had been hardened by the fiend of gold, who could thrust out a sinless child from its heritage, bowed down her head and wept tears of sympathy, which she dried on an embroidered and perfumed handkerchief, that cost a sum which would have supported a poor family for six months.

Milford ended by saying:

"I see, madam, that I have nothing further to add—but that your own good heart will tell you what you had best do."

"You have judged me rightly, sir," said the lady, rising; "and I will pray you to excuse me a moment, while I order my carriage, and arrange my dress to accompany you to the residence of this poor girl and her father."

With a low and graceful courtesy, she left the apartment.

Milford glanced around him. He had read of such magnificence as that which now surrounded him, but he had never dreamed of seeing it realized. The high-arched ceiling, with its arabesque ornaments, the carved and gilded cornice, the rich carpeting under foot, the superb Versailles mirrors that almost lined the walls, the carmine satin drapery, mingled profusely with lace that fell from roof to floor, the superb ottomans, the Louis XIV. tables, loaded with a thousand rich and dainty ornaments, the carved chairs, the graceful statues that stood in niches, the rich chandeliers whose pendents sent forth prismatic rays, all combined and arranged with exquisite taste, made up such a picture of luxury as is rarely equalled. Yet strange to say, it did not impress the young man with a sense of novelty. While they satisfied his artistic love of the beautiful, he was not dazzled or daunted by it. He felt that if in-talled at once in the midst of such surroundings, he should not feel out of place.

He had hardly completed his rapid survey of the apartment when the mistress of the house returned, wearing a bonnet and shawl and ready for a drive.

The young man escorted her to the carriage, and handing her in, took a seat beside her at her request. The carriage, horses and harness were all in exquisite taste, and the coachman, instead of being in livery, was dressed in black, with white vest and gloves. When the door was closed, the carriage glided away. In a short time it drew up before a low door in a two-story wooden building in Chatham Street. Milford showed the lady up stairs, while the servant who opened the street door received a basket from the hand of the aristocratic-looking coachman.

They entered a small sitting-room, meanly furnished, where they found the father of the circus-rider seated on a chair, with his hands resting on his knees, looking the picture of hopelessness and misery. His hollow cheeks, his sunken eyes, his ghastly pallor, made a painful impression on his visitors.

"Mr. Bradwell," said Milford—"I have ventured to bring this lady, Mrs. Norman, to see your daughter. She has been much interested in what I have told her about you both."

The circus rider had risen, and offered seats to his visitors. He bowed courteously to them, and answered, "I am obliged to you, sir, and deeply obliged to the lady. If she will wait a moment, till the doctor comes out, I can tell whether my poor girl can receive her."

"What surgeon do you employ, sir?" asked Mrs. Norman.

"Dr. Plyant, madam."

"I know him—an excellent person—very skillful."

"He enjoys a high reputation."

Mrs. Norman appeared astonished at the ease and self-possession of Bradwell, and at the correctness of his language. The first was professional; the latter something of an enigma.

In a moment more, Dr. Plyant appeared from the inner room. He was a little dapper gentleman, very fashionably dressed; but he had a piercing black eye and an ample forehead, white and intellectual.

"Ah, Mrs. Norman!" said he, "come to visit our patient! Well, this is really kind of you."

"Pray, how is she, doctor?" asked the father, anxiously.

"Well, sir," said the surgeon. "She is getting along well—excellently well, I may say. No bones are broken, and I cannot perceive any very alarming indications of internal injury. But her system is shaken, sir—shaken—"

"Can you tell me," said the man, clasping his hands nervously—"how soon she will be able to ride again?"

The doctor shook his head and smiled.

"My good friend," said he, "we must not think of riding for a long—long—while to come. What we need now is rest—nourishing food in small quantities—a little of the purest wine."

"Good God!" said the man. "Neither of us can afford rest. And as for food, save of the coarsest kind, and wine—you speak of impossibilities. Whence am I procure them?"

"Make yourself perfectly easy, my good man," said Mrs. Norman. "I have brought with me a pair of chickens, and some very choice Madeira, and I will see that the supply is kept up. And, doctor, visit the young girl as often as her case requires, and make out the bill to me. And, Mr. Bradwell—take this purse—it is pretty well filled. You need not scruple to receive it, for my means are ample, as the doctor, here, can tell you."

"Ample indeed!" said the doctor.

The old clown bowed low, and stammered forth his thanks, while a faint blush over-spread his thin and sunken cheeks. Milford thought there was a little indelicacy in the manner in which Mrs. Norman proffered her benefits, but since the relief was real, he felt that he had no right to be censorious. To criticise charity is to lack charity.

"Bradwell!" said the doctor, as he drew on his gloves, "you were born under a lucky star."

The man only sighed.

"And, now, doctor," said the lady, "can I see your patient?"

"Certainly, madam—and the sight of so much loveliness and kindness ought to have a restorative effect on her."

Mrs. Norman simpered, and told the doctor he was a sad flatterer. The doctor protested he was sincere, and bowed his adieux, while the lady passed into the chamber of the invalid.

"Born under a lucky star!" muttered Bradwell, when he was alone with Milford. "Well, perhaps I was. Sit down, sir, sit down. I'm not afraid to talk with you—there's a sympathy in your looks which does one as much good as this fine lady's gold. A lucky star indeed! Perhaps it was lucky that my poor wife died after a lingering decline that kept me poorer than when I married her. Perhaps it was lucky that my boy broke his back when he was learning the tight wire—that my girl, there, lies prostrate and hopeless, and that I am a wreck of my former self, broken in health and spirits, with no prospect before me but a pauper's grave, leaving my poor child to a hard, unfeeling world. Lucky! no—no! misfortune has fairly hunted me down. I have tried my best to baffle my ill luck—I have stood at bay and fought like a staunch buck—but it is all in vain—I am a poor, broken old man!"

He leaned his head on his hand, and the tears coursed down his furrowed cheeks. The tears of a man are so painful. They are the scalding drops wrung from the bitterest anguish.

Milford laid his hand kindly on the old man's arm.

"Don't despair," said he. "It's a long lane that has no turning; and it's always darkest before day. These are trite sayings—but there is a world of truth and comfort in them. Young as I am, I have had my bitter trials—but they have not extinguished the star of hope."

"But my trials were not in the very first dawn of life," answered the old man. "They have been thickening and gathering towards its sunset, and betoken a night to close in storms. Listen—my story is an old one—but even the old mountebank may impart some instruction. I belong to a respectable family. My father was a wealthy farmer in the western part of the State, and I was destined to share with my brother the labors of the farm, and to inherit, equally with him, on my father's death. My father was a good man, honest and upright, but severe—a bigot in religion, and the slave of gold. He thought he had found the solution of the problem of the worship of God and Mammon. My poor mother was like him in all respects. She killed herself with overwork and was buried years ago. My brother, too, took after his parents. I blush to say that he was the meanest boy in school; my father, by the way, to do him justice, gave us both an excellent education. At school my brother distinguished himself in the mathematics, while I acquired languages with facility, was fond of learning poetry by heart, and kept the whole school good-natured by comic verses of my own composition. He saved all his pocket money; I wasted all mine. He gave all his leisure hours to work on a piece of land my father allotted to him, by which he reaped a golden harvest. I employed all mine in athletic exercises, in running, vaulting, riding and swimming. My idleness and levity rendered my position at home very uncomfortable. At last, one day, sir—a circus came into the neighboring village—this was after I had left school. They entered with banners displayed, with horses decked with spangling housings, and gentlemen and ladies splendidly dressed riding on them; but why narrate all the features of a circus-show? They set up their tent on the green common in the heart of the town, and posted up their bills everywhere. I determined to see the show, but I knew that to ask permission would be to meet a refusal. And I had no money, prodigal that I was—so I asked a loan of brother Joe. He not only refused me, but told my father of my intention. My father forbade my going. I lost my temper and declared that I would go, whatever came of it. The result was that I, a grown up boy, was locked into my room. As soon as it was dark, I quickly opened my window, slid down the spout, stole through the orchard, and was soon on the village green. I contrived to crawl under the canvass in a place that was not strictly guarded, and soon worked my way into a good seat. Looking back on that evening, through the long vista of years, I can honestly say that it was the very happiest of my life. Sir, that evening fixed my destiny. I was dazzled, fascinated, enchanted. That night, when the circus company struck their tent, I eloped with them. My father and mother made no effort to reclaim me. For a time, I served in the stables as a groom. I used to lead in the horses, and assist in spreading the carpet for the ground tumbling, and help stretch the tight rope, and rosin the horses' backs—fine employment for a lad who had received a good education, wasn't it? In the meantime I made great proficiency in learning the exercises of the ring. I made my first appearance in a cavalcade. At last, as they found out I had some humor, I was allowed to chalk my face and extend my mouth from ear to ear, and tumble and crack jokes, and turn summersets in the tan. I was promoted to a clownship. And I have been a clown ever since. I have told you of my domestic incidents—and now you have my whole life before you."

"But did you never hear from home?"

"Yes—I heard, but not directly—heard of my mother's death when it happened—and of my father's—and how I was left out of the will, and everything came into my brother's hands."

"But would not your brother assist you?"

"He! he wouldn't shed a tear if he were to hear of my death by starvation. I once applied to him for assistance, when I had a sick wife on my hands, and was ill myself and out of an engagement. Such a letter as he wrote me in reply! It was the letter of a hypocrite—a fiend! But I tell you, sir—that poor and wretched as I am—a mountebank—to day almost a beggar—I had rather be what I am, than what he is, the slave of gold! This money, sir, is a fiend, and it makes fiends of us all. I have seen it change gentleness to fierceness—frankness to hypocrisy—honesty to fraud—virtue to vice—and I can say, with my hand on my heart, I thank God I am a poor man! Thank God that the tempter comes not near me—thank God that I am worthless and no man can afford to buy me!"

What more he might have said, was cut off by the entrance of Mrs. Norman.

"My good friend," said she, addressing the clown in a tone of condescending patronage; "I have found your daughter a very interesting person, I assure you. And I will add, for your encouragement, that I will see that she wants for no comfort during the continuance of her illness."

"I trust, madam, we shall not be a burthen on your kindness long," said Bradwell. "Irene will mount her horse as soon as she is able to move."

"Don't hurry her, my good friend," said the lady.

"We are poor, madam," answered the clown "And poverty knows no rest in this world. And we have that in us which frets at a condition of dependence."

"Your sentiments do you honor, sir," said Mrs. Norman, bowing. She motioned to Milford, and the latter, after shaking hands with Bradwell, escorted her to her carriage.

"You'll ride up town with me, wont you?" she asked, with one of her sweetest smiles.

"Thank you, madam, but I must go at once to my office."

"Your office?"

"Yes, madam, I am an editor, now."

"An editor! why, I never should have thought it. I am acquainted with some of the gentlemen of the press—particularly with Mr. Crowpen, reporter for the 'Arrow,' a very eccentric gentleman, but very agreeable. I used to send him invitations for all my soirees, and what do you think? the next morning he would describe every single person present, and all that we did and said, dresses and everything. The names were not written out in full, you know; only 'Mrs. Great P. dash, little y, Great N. dash, little n,'—meaning me, sir, looked splendidly in her lilac satin and diamonds, and all such stuff as that."

"Of course, you ceased to invite this indiscreet gentleman?" said Milford, lingering at the carriage door.

"O, no! I didn't. I'm the most forgiving woman in the world," answered Mrs. Norman, smiling. "Sometimes I'd say, after one of his reports had come, 'Mr Crowpen—that was really too bad of you,'—but there the matter rested."

After a pause—she added:

"You editors are so fond of snapping up every little thing to make a story about, that I thought I'd give you a hint. Now, as likely as not, you'll make a paragraph—I believe that's what's you call it—about this poor girl's accident. And very likely you'll add all about the kindness and generosity and liberality of a certain well known fashionable lady—initials and my number of the street given—how wont you?"

"I'm afraid, after doing so, I should never venture to call on you again, which I am most anxious to do."

"Try and see. I know how you men love to tease us poor women."

She smiled on him, after this broad hint at a 'puff,' bowed, and the carriage rolled away.

"I think I can read your character, Mrs. Percy Norman," thought Milford, as he walked towards his office. "You are one of the vain frivolous butterflies of fashion, which live only in the glare and glitter of noonday. Your very charities are made the means of display."

But though this discerning young man had a glimpse of Mrs Norman's character—that was all. The sweeping dress and the satin *bradequin* hid the cloven foot.

CHAPTER XV.

NEW YORK BY GASLIGHT.

It was night—a cool but bright night. The stars sparkled over head like diamonds scattered on blue velvet drapery. Broadway was ablaze with lamps. The shop windows of the jewellers glittered and sparkled with the reflections of the gas from tiaras of jewels, from costly chiselled cups, from rings of fabulous price, and a thousand other articles of bijouterie. The clink of hammer, file and saw had ceased for the day; ponderous engines had ceased to clank and groan, and the sons of toil had retired to their homes. The hum and murmur that reached the ear arose from pleasure-seeking multitudes. The carriages that dashed along the streets were freighted with light hearts—elastic feet trod the sidewalk. In the balcony of the museum, bugle, drum and clarionet pealed forth a melody not unpleasing from a distance.

Let us pause here, near the façade of the Park Theatre, not yet assailed by vandalism, and still the honored temple of the drama. Observe how the triangle of the park is defined by a fiery line of light, and how the strong illumination brings out the marble front of the City Hall. Trace the lines of light and the dark tide of human beings down Chatham Street into Franklin Square. Beside us rises, mute, dark and solemn, the tall spire of St. Pauls, standing in the midst of the noise, the gayety, the levity and light, like some sad mourner in a circle of uncongenial spirits.

But this is no time for mournful thoughts. In front of the Park Theatre an immense crowd is congregated, only a narrow passage being left from the main entrance to the street. Carriage after carriage drives up, and more are waiting for their turn. Yet it is not a play-night. What is it then that collects such a concourse of spectators? To-night, the theatre is given up to a fancy dress ball, an exclusive, aristocratic affair, and the outsiders are assuming the privilege of freeborn citizens, by watching the pleasure parties on their passage from their carriages to the theatre, and commenting in audible tones to each other, on the dresses and the beauty of the ladies.

And, indeed, the passage of those birds of paradise was a brilliant spectacle. With fleet footsteps, escorted by gay cavaliers, they ran the gauntlet of the gaping crowd, and there was a constant stream of bright plumes and diamonds, satins, silks and ermine, borne by fashionable beauties, and flanked by velvet cloaks, clashing swords, and jingling spurs.

Some of the remarks of the populace were rude enough, but when, from a dark green carriage, there alighted a tall cavalier dressed in the style of Charles I., with plume and cloak and sword, an elegant and manly figure, and when that cavalier assisted from the carriage to the vestibule a sultana, attired in a Turkish dress of exquisite taste, whose dark eyes shamed the diamonds that glittered on her person, there was one murmur of undisguised admiration, a popular tribute to a noble and well matched pair. They vanished into the building. Who were they? Mrs. Percy Norman, who had, on this occasion, doffed her widow's weeds, and Mr. Harry Redwood, one of the leaders of the New York ton.

Among the many spectators of this scene, more or less interested, was a pale, thin young man, of a slight but elegant figure, whose dress, however, was deplorably shabby, who stood leaning on a lamp-post, and looking on with a countenance expressive of the deepest interest. As beauty after beauty flitted by him, his eyes lit up and flashed with sudden lustre, and then grew dim and sad as they disappeared. When Mrs. Norman flashed forth from her carriage, like a star from a cloud, he bent forward—and his lips moved as if he would have spoken—his whole frame expressed eagerness and attention. She disappeared, and with a sigh, he pulled his slouched hat over his eyes and turned away.

Hard by was a restaurant, the entrance to which was by a flight of steps descending from the sidewalk. On the sign-board was depicted a slice of sirloin steak with such marvellous fidelity, that an experienced epicure might have been deceived by it, and ordered its removal to the gridiron. From the doorway arose a mingled odor of many choice dishes, combined in a most appetizing "bouquet." From the subterranean recesses of this gastronomic temple, rose joyous peals of laughter mingled with the bell like ring of glasses, and the clatter of knives and forks. The pale young man paused at the head of the steps and looked and listened; and if, in the careless throng that passed, there had been but one keen observer, he would have noticed a hungry, wolfish look in the sunken but bright eyes of the wayfarer, betokening a keen and craving appetite. But he passed on—now with rapid steps, and turned down Broadway, instinctively avoiding collision with the crowd, but observing no individual in the moving mass.

Just round the corner made by the museum, an exchange broker's window was glittering with light. In the very focus of the radiance of the gas lamps, prodigally spread out on an inclined plane covered with black velvet, lay a profusion of gold and silver coins, some fresh and sparkling from the mint, others that had passed from hand to hand for years. Here was a long coil of eagles, half and quarter eagles; there a circle of doubloons; in another place piles of thick Mexican dollars, side by side, with louis d'ors and Napoleons. The pale, shabbily-dressed young man paused long at this window, and as he gazed and gazed on these substantial tokens of wealth, his eyes dilated, and he clenched his hands tightly to his sides as if struggling with a desire to dash in the transparent medium that interposed between him and the golden piles, and to seize the spoils that lay temptingly before him.

Suddenly he turned away, and clearing a passage through the crowd, resumed his former course, swiftly and wildly. He halted no more to gaze in at the windows of glittering stores, or the tempting doorways of restaurants, or at the marvels of art at the print shop windows, but walked on and on, until he reached the Battery; where, swinging open an iron gate, he passed under the shadow of the trees into the comparative darkness. Dropping down upon a bench, he threw his hat beside him, for his forehead was now flushed and feverish, and looked forth into the night. The cold breeze swept through the rocky doorway of the Narrows, and fanned his hot brow and burning cheek, and lifted his long hair. Lights twinkled on the shores of Staten Island. Dusky sails flitted spectre like over the dark blue waters. The waves washed against the rocky wall of the Battery, with a low, dismal, melancholy murmur. The place seemed utterly deserted. No eye appeared to watch the stranger—except those starry eyes of heaven, and their twinkling brilliancy seemed to mock his desolation.

Suddenly he arose, and, smiting his forehead with his clenched hand, rushed forward to the railing. Bending his face over it, he looked down into the night-black waters, spangled with the broken images of the stars, and the waves seemed to murmur a deadly spell in his ear. He glanced hastily around him, and then placing his left hand on the parapet, was in the very act of springing over, when a strong hand was laid upon his shoulder, and drew him back.

He turned fiercely, and saw a dark, stout-built figure.

"What are you about?" asked the new-comer.

"You can guess," said the young man.

"I am a poor hand at guessing," said the stranger.

"Well, then," said the young man; "I am weary of life—and have resolved to make an end of it."

"You are frank."

"I am desperate!"

"I see that."

"By what right do you interfere with my actions?"

"By the right that every man has to prevent the consummation of a crime."

"Of a crime?"

"A folly, if you like it better."

"Crime or folly," said the young man, "you may frustrate my purpose now—but it is not in human power to prevent its ultimate accomplishment."

"Suicide is madness."

"Is it less madness to sit still and die of hunger like a famished wolf?"

"Any man can get bread who chooses, in this country."

"Ay, but one cannot live by bread alone Suppose that to me other tastes are as imperious as the common necessities of nature. Suppose that I revolt against poverty—and shabbiness and deprivation. Pigs on your way, whoever you are, and leave me to my fate. It is useless to thwart me. I am bent on leaving this dismal world."

"Dismal world, young man? You hardly know it yet. What! would you leave the world, so young as you are? You have not exhausted half its pleasures. Look at this imperial city—its palatial residences—its glittering magazines—its stores of wealth—its lovely women, its arts, its luxuries, its equipages. Why, believe me, it is a glorious world."

"Ay, for them that hold the key to its enjoyments—gold!"

"Come—come—sit down with me awhile," said the stranger. "I see you are beginning to reason, and that is a good sign. You are no longer a raving maniac."

The young man suffered himself to be led back to the seat from which he had started when obeying the wild impulse that had drifted him towards self-destruction.

"You have a keen eye for the beautiful," said the stranger.

"I see you know me," replied the young man.

"I never saw you till this evening—and yet your face has made an indelible impression on my memory."

"Well, well—go on."

"You are one fitted to bask in the smiles of beauty—fitted, let me add, to win the smiles of beauty. But the smiles of beauty is the guerdon of gold. Boys talk of love—but we men know that hearts, now-a days, are won by metal more attractive. Beauty once was wooed and won. Now it is bought and sold. The presents glittering on the table of the bride are but a portion of the price paid for her. 'Tis the heaviest purse that wins the loveliest bride."

"It is too true."

"And, if I mistake you not, you are fond of luxurious living. Your palate is as dainty as your taste is refined."

"I see you know me well."

"And like a man of sense," pursued the stranger, "you crave, above all things, the possession of gold—for that will give you everything you desire. The world is a vast bazaar, and all its glittering bubbles are for sale."

"You speak like an oracle," said the young man. "But if a stranger to me, as you aver, by what mysterious power have you probed my very soul?"

"Nothing was more easy. Wrapped up in your own wild thoughts and fancies, you forgot that the expression of your face was for the time being, an index to your character. I watched you at the steps of the Park Theatre, and looked through your eyes into your soul as those lovely ladies swept by you, rustling in silks and satins, and tossing perfumes upon the air. I saw you gaze hungrily down into the restaurant; I saw you turn away in desperation, maddened by the sight of gold, and I followed you to this spot."

"You have tracked me well, sir; and your insolence—"

"Give it its true name; say, rather, the interest with which you inspired me induced me to follow you?"

"Well, call it what you will," said the stranger, in a softened tone. "I seek to disguise neither my character nor my purposes. Young as I am, talented as I flatter myself to be, I am a ruined and desperate man. With me the alternative is gold or death. I have no means of winning the former, for the days are gone by when a man could sell his soul to the Evil One."

"There you are mistaken," said the stranger, quickly.

"Well—don't interrupt me, when I am in the train of confession. The name I have always gone by, is Mark Selwin—but that is merely a fancy name—I was an abandoned child, and never knew father or mother. A philanthropic man took me out of the street, and gave me a sort of an education—but he is long since dead. I have tried one thing and another. But I am a portrait-painter as much as anything else. I might have succeeded as such—was in the fair way to fortune, indeed—but I always hated plodding, and loved pleasure. Dicing and drinking have brought me to what I am. I have lost my place in society—spent my last dollar—wear my last ragged suit upon my back, and here, in my youth, have run to the very end of my rope."

"Not a very uncommon history," remarked the other, drily.

"Perhaps not."

"You have not probably supped this evening?"

"Nor dined this noon; nor breakfasted this morning."

"Ah, that accounts for your unreasonable conduct. A hungry stomach has no ears. I ate a capital dinner at five, and yet this keen air has given me a ravenous appetite. Will you do me the honor of taking supper with me?"

"With a great deal of pleasure, I assure you," replied the young man, with a bitter laugh. "I never refused an invitation of the sort—and am little likely to do so at the present moment."

"Does the water look as inviting as it did just now?"

"The next time I am as hungry, it will be quite as much of a temptation."

"Come on, then," said the stranger. "My hotel is hard-by."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

Linking his arm in that of the young man, the stranger left the Battery, and passing up into Broadway, in a few minutes entered a large hotel. After a word with the clerk in the office, he was ushered, with his guest, into a small and handsomely furnished apartment, where an excellent game supper was soon served.

So long as the waiter was in attendance, Mr. Selwin toyed with his roll and ate a few delicate morsels from the breast of a partridge; but when left alone with his entertainer, he devoured his food with wolfish voracity. His host, who scarcely bore him company, watched him with a glance of satisfaction. At last, nature was satisfied, and with a deep sigh, the young man leaned back in his chair, and now for the first time scrutinized the face and figure of the stranger.

He seemed to be past the middle period of life, was strongly built, and fashionably dressed in black, with a white vest crossed by a heavy gold chain, the only ornament he wore. His features were hard, and the attempt he made to impart a smiling expression to his mouth was a failure in the eyes of one professionally accustomed to study character.

Mark Selwin, however, was not in a mood or condition to find fault with features or expression. The satisfaction of his animal nature was all he desired at the present moment.

"Let me order another course!" said the stranger.

"Nothing for me," said Selwin.

But the stranger rang the bell.

"A bottle of Champagne, and a bottle of Burgundy," was the order given to the waiter.

The wine was placed on the table, and the waiter retired.

Selwin's eyes sparkled as the champagne foamed in his goblet, and he quaffed it at a draught to the health of his entertainer.

Another and another glass was drained, and then came the Burgundy. The stranger contrived that the greater portion should be drunk by his guest, he himself remaining calm while the excitement of the other momentarily increased.

"While these bubbles are bursting on the brim of the goblet," said Selwin, "the river is rolling dark and cold to the ocean. It might have swept my lifeless body out to sea to-night, but for you. Give me your name. I have hitherto toasted a nameless friend. I must now know whom to remember. Your memory shall last me all my life—though it may not last me long. Your name?"

"Gerald Griffin," answered the other, quietly.

"Your health, Mr. Griffin. Ah, well, you have given me a banquet fit for the gods."

"Would you like to fare as sumptuously every night?"

"Would I like it? try me," said Selwin, who was rather excited, though too much of a roue to be much affected.

"Would you like to drive a fast horse on the avenue?"

"Ay, verily."

"Would you like to wear fine clothes and flaunt it with the best? Would you like to shine in the highest circles of fashion? Would you like to stake the red gold on the green cloth, careless if you won or lost?"

"Of course I should, my dear enigmatical friend? But why do you propound these questions to me? I have no way of obtaining the means—and I told you the days had gone by when a man could sell himself for gold."

"Suppose those days returned. Fancy me, if you like, Mephistophiles!"

"Mephistophiles, your good health!" said Selwin, filling his glass.

"Would you sell yourself to a liberal capitalist, body and soul?"

"*Cela va sans dire, mon cher*—of course, I would."

"Seriously?"

"Indubitably."

"I think I could find you a purchaser, then."

"Where?"

"Here."

"You?"

"Yes!"

"Explain yourself?"

"I am willing, provided you will enter into an agreement to serve my purposes, to carry out my plans, to fulfil my instructions to the letter, to supply you with all the money you require for your pleasures and extravagances."

"One moment," said Selwin, leaning his elbows on the table, and looking fixedly in Griffin's face. "I am no strait-laced Puritan. I don't stick at trifles. I don't ask whether what you propose to me is honorable or dishonorable. But I *have* a rooted repugnance to putting myself in danger of the law. My present dress is shabby enough in all conscience, but yet I prefer it infinitely to that which the State supplies to its guests at Sing Sing. And I am such an ardent lover of liberty, that the very idea of imprisonment within four walls is enough to make me shudder."

"Make yourself perfectly easy," said Griffin. "I may ask you to do what the world calls disreputable acts, but never shall solicit your participation in anything illegal. I'm a lawyer myself, and know the crooks and channels of the statutes perfectly well."

"And I presume you are perfectly able to fulfil your part of the agreement?"

"Here is an earnest," said Griffin; and he drew a rouleau of gold from his pocket, and passed it over to Selwin.

"There are two hundred dollars," said he. "Does that look like deception?"

"It looks like necromancy!" said Selwin. "Do you want a note for this?"

"A note! no. But you may give me a receipt."

He produced writing materials, filled out a receipt, passed it to Selwin for signature, and after coolly waiting till the ink was dry, stowed it away in an ample pocket-book.

"The details of the service I require of you," said he, "I will explain hereafter. For to-night it is enough to say that it will require you to frequent fashionable resorts, to make fashionable acquaintances, to amuse yourself, and to spend money freely—and you shall have an ample supply. Of course, to unlimited gambling, I must oppose a veto."

"I had just learned the tricks of the cards when I was completely ruined," said Selwin.

"Well, I do not care to be seen much with you. So we will meet at seven o'clock to-morrow morning on the Battery, and I will indicate a place where we can commune in safety. But in the first place, you must get a new suit of clothes."

"Of course, my dear friend. My own self-respect would command it."

"Well then, good-night. Remember to-morrow morning on the Battery."

When the painter was gone, Griffin paced the apartment from end to end.

"I wanted a decoy-duck," said he; "and this is the very fellow for my purpose! It was no use for me to try to do this business myself. I can't render myself fashionable or presentable. He is genteel, has a good address, and is utterly unscrupulous. He is a good purchase—a capital investment."

At this moment his reverie was interrupted by a tap at the door.

"Come in!" said the usurer.

A very genteel and fashionably-dressed young man, wearing a Spanish cloak that partially concealed his figure, entered, and closing the door behind him, bowed politely to the usurer.

"Mr. Griffin, I believe?"

"That's my name," answered Griffin, shortly. "Yours?"

"Rosine Charlton," answered the visitor.

"Rosine! in this disguise? What masquerading folly is this, girl?" asked Griffin, sternly.

"I could not get to you to-night, without observation, otherwise," said the waiting-maid.

"Well, well," said Griffin, "sit down and be brief in your communication. It is late and my habits are regular."

"Well, sir, I have something important to communicate," said the disguised waiting-maid.

"Out with it, then!"

"Don't hurry me so—you confuse me. My mistress went to the Fancy Ball to-night."

"In the dress of a sultana."

"You knew it, then?"

"Yes—that Redwood went with her."

"How did you find that out, sir?"

"How? Simply by standing in the street among a crowd of gaping fools, and seeing her pass with my own eyes. You ought to have given me information of this beforehand."

"Indeed, sir," said Rosine, "I could not find an opportunity."

"You should have made an opportunity," said Griffin, sternly. "Beware! if you play me false, your fall shall be as great as your rise has been. Remember that I have bought you and paid for you. Do you wish to return to your needle and your garret, where I found you sick and starving, laboring sixteen hours a day for a hare sustenance? I gave you money—got you a place—and paid you to be a spy upon your employer."

"Have I not been so, sir? And yet, it seems hard to play the spy on one who treats me so generously, and reposes such entire confidence in me."

"Weren't you *paid* to acquire her confidence? Wasn't that the express object of my placing you in Mrs. Norman's family? And do you forget that I have a certain paper in my possession, the production of which in a court of law, would consign you to its pains and penalties?"

"Say no more, sir, say no more—it was a momentary weakness," said Rosine. "I am willing to fulfil my bargain to the uttermost, and the proof of it is that I am here to-night."

"Well—let me hear no more of these scruples. And now what have you to say?"

"This much. To day my mistress confided a secret to me of, I think, the utmost importance."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes, sir. It was an avowal of a criminal act."

"A criminal act?"

"No less. She confessed that, desirous of obtaining the whole of her husband's property—she paid an agent to put his only child by his first wife out of the way."

"Is it possible? I know that the general's will devises the bulk of his property on an heir male, failing which, it comes to her. But the boy is dead and buried long ago."

"No, sir, the general believed so, and the agent, whoever he was, so reported to Mrs. Norman. But she has received recently a confession from him, that the boy did not die, and is, to the best of his belief, now living."

"Now living! He would be then some twenty-two or three years of age. Can it be possible that—but no—it is hardly within probability that I should have stumbled on him by chance."

"Do you think this matter of importance, sir?" asked Rosine, who had paid no attention to this last remark.

"Of importance! The very highest. Here, girl—you know that gold comes from me like drops of blood. But here is a twenty-dollar piece—take it. More will be forthcoming for more intelligence. Excuse my rudeness to you a moment since. I wronged you in my thoughts."

"Indeed you did, sir."

"I acknowledge it. Continue to be faithful and vigilant. Find out if possible the name of Mrs. Norman's agent, but do not be too intrusive in your inquiries. Ha! the clue is in my hands; and I will so weave my meshes about her, that she cannot escape from the entanglement."

"I hope and trust, sir," said Rosine, "that you do not meditate her utter ruin."

"Pshaw! you think and talk like a fool. Her ruin! No! I would not strip her of her fortune—but mine she shall be—mine in all her beauty and her wealth—and then—then—Rosine, if I succeed in winning her hand—in extorting her promise to marry me—you shall be rich yourself. I shall then be so rich in the world's goods—that is, if all my schemes prosper—that I can afford to be generous. And now whither do you propose going?"

"To the Park Theatre."

"That's right, my girl. Follow them close—overhear what they say, and report to me whatever you can gather."

"I will, sir, faithfully."

"Yet stay, let me look at you. Is there any chance of your detection? No—your disguise is perfect. That false mustache will baffle all attempt at recognition. But she will inquire for you when she comes home."

"I shall be there first, with time enough to change my dress."

"Good. That will place you above suspicion. And now off with you—for the night wears on."

Leaving the hotel, the disguised waiting-maid pushed her way through the street to the Park Theatre, with a step so bold and masculine, and a bearing so self possessed, that it would have defied the closest scrutiny.

As she entered the house, the ball was at its height. The pit had been boarded over, so that the floor extended from the boxes to the back of the stage—flags and streamers radiated from the central chandelier, and garlands of flowers were suspended from the gallery. A magnificent orchestra was playing one of Strauss's waltzes, and a hundred couples in the gayest fancy dresses, were whirling round the circle. Half-concealed by the proscenium pillar against which she leaned, Rosine was an apparently unmoved spectator of the bewildering and fascinating scene.

At the close of the waltz, Redwood led his partner, Mrs. Norman, to one of the wings apart from the gay crowd. Rosine had anticipated this movement, and concealed herself as they approached.

Panting and flushed with the exercise, the beautiful widow leaned heavily upon the arm of her cavalier, who bent over her till his tall plume swept the diamond-wreathed waves of her raven hair.

"It has been an evening of enchantment," said Redwood—"but to me it has owed all its charm to your presence."

"You are a confirmed flatterer," replied the lady, smiling.

"If I were so, I could not but speak truth in an angel's presence," answered Redwood.

"Very original and satisfactory!" said the widow. "Who ever heard of a woman's being compared to an angel before?"

"What a provoking creature you are! Then let me compare an angel to you then:

> Angels were painted fair to look like you—
> There's all in you that we believe in heaven
> Amazing brightness, purity and love."

"Do you mean to say that 'angels are painted,' because we are sometimes?"

"Mrs. Norman!"

"Mr. Redwood!"

"Can you be serious a moment?"

"A moment! Haven't I been serious for months? You have been complaining of my sobriety, sir. And wasn't it expressly to oblige you that I this day laid aside my mourning dress, doubtless to the scandal of our best society, and appeared in this fantastic costume and with all my diamonds, to-night?"

"Ah, those diamonds are less brilliant than those lustrous eyes."

"Really, Mr. Redwood, if you persist in boring me with such stale compliments, I shall order my carriage and go home directly."

"And abandon the oysters and champagne?"

"Now you talk like a man of sense. No, I'm not quite a fairy—and will give you my hand for the supper-table, with a great deal of pleasure."

"Only for the march to the supper-room. That would be too tantalizing."

"Well, then—you shall hand me to my carriage afterwards."

"Julia—you shall—you must hear me," said Redwood, passionately. "You cannot have misconstrued my attentions—you—"

"Heavens! what is the man about! See how many eyes are fastened on us!"

"Well, then—you will permit me to call on you to-morrow?"

"You can call certainly—I do not say that I shall be at home."

"Do you wish to drive me to despair?"

At this moment, the orchestra struck up a march, and the glittering company fell into rank. Rosine seized the opportunity to steal away.

"Almost a declaration!" thought she. "And listened to with evident pleasure. Matters are approaching a crisis."

She left the theatre and hastened up Broadway. In the vicinity of Mrs. Norman's, lived a friend in whom she reposed entire confidence, and here it was she once more assumed the habiliments of her sex. She was so expeditious that she had been at home more than an hour when her mistress returned.

"What! sitting up for me!" said the lady. "I am sure I did not expect it, or desire it."

"It was my duty, madam."

"You are too particular, child. But since you are up, you may disrobe me."

"Have you had a pleasant evening, madam?"

"Very. And all the newspaper reporters were there. I spoke to one or two of the wretches, and you may be sure I shall figure in the reports to-morrow as large as life. My *rentree* into society will not pass unnoticed."

Dreams of vanity peopled the slumbers of this fashionable lady; but could she have suspected that there was a spy on all her movements, that around her destiny a cunning hand was weaving unseen a web she could not break, sleep would have fled her eyelids, and her cheeks would have been moistened with tears of agony.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE LATEST MIRACLE.

A Philadelphia paper gives a droll story of the "wooden man," that was exhibited here some time ago, and which its manufacturer professed could talk, as well as walk, without human assistance. Agreeably to the story in question, its inventor, returning suddenly to his room, one evening, found that the gigantic article had wound itself up, broken into the adjoining studio of a painter, frightened the artist into convulsions, and was making love to his lay figure. To his surprise, the monster began to converse with him, when, overcome with alarm, he fled, and sold the machine to a museum proprietor. The latter undertook to have him carried away, but the weight of the automaton occasioned him a fall in the street, when the figure rose to its feet, wound itself up once more, pursued its new owner down Broadway to the Battery, and, failing to catch him, jumped overboard.

There is not much originality in this notion, though it is amusing. The same idea has been used by half-a-dozen old writers But, apart from all this, it is a note-worthy fact that this *androides*, like Maelzel's famous chess-player, owed all its peculiar powers to human invention. Friar Bacon constructed a brazen head which did speak. Albertus Magnus, we are told, wasted thirty years of his life in fashioning a wooden figure that walked to the door and opened it when a visitor knocked; and it is not long since Mr. Faber had an automaton that, to our own knowledge, distinctly spoke English—though it did it with a German accent, of course, as its artificer could speak it in no other manner. But all these structures accomplished the several purposes of their inventors legitimately, and by the aid only of exquisitely delicate machinery. The "wooden man" of this city is, therefore, an impostor, and not by any means as ingenious a one as Von Kempelen's, or Maelzel's. The latter became useless when the very small man died who used to occupy it, and astonish the credulous. The former must remain useless, because the trick it resorts to is so transparent, that it cannot deceive the most ignorant.—*N. Y. Sunday Times.*

A DELICATE HINT.

In England, it is the rule for the ladies to attend the assizes; in Ireland, it is the exception. At any place the practice is absurd and indelicate. The fair sex who visit the courts of law, listening for hours to evidence and speeches which they could take no interest in, even if they understood them, evidently go to exhibit their charms and their wardrobe. An aggravated murder case places them as a tragedy would. But their peculiar delight is to listen to the details of an action for breach of promise of marriage. In the cases of *crim. con.*, the crier of the court gives a preliminary warning:—"Ladies and boys will leave the court." I recollect one of these cases, in which the bulk of the petticoated spectators did not vacate their seats—their prurient curiosity was predominant. In stating the facts, the prosecuting counsel, seeing ladies in court, and not wishing to wound their sense of delicacy, hesitated for words in which to wrap up the necessary grossness of the details. "Brother," said the judge, "as all the modest women have left the court, you may call things by their proper names." Then followed a great fluttering of bonnet plumes, and in five minutes after the reproof, the fair sex had left the court.—*Sketches of the Irish Bar.*

ARTFUL DODGES.

A lady in Philadelphia, the other day, received a note from her dressmaker, requesting her to call immediately. The lady complied with the call, leaving her house locked up. On arriving at the dressmaker's she discovered that the note was a forgery, and on her return she found that her house had been broken open, and a large amount of clothing and jewelry stolen. The thief was subsequently arrested, and most of the articles recovered.

A new game has been tried in Baltimore. Two well-dressed females rush into a house, breathless with fright, pretending to be pursued by rowdies. Before they half recover under the kind attentions of the inmates, a loud rapping is heard at the hall door, and the strangers scream and rush up stairs, and while the folks below make investigations at the door, the frightened young ladies fill their capacious pockets with whatever valuables they find in their hasty flight through the chambers. When the row is over and they are assured that they can safely come down, they depart with many apologies for the trouble they have given. When the folks go into their chambers they begin to understand what it all meant.—*N. Y. Herald.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

I DREAMED OF THEE.

To Georgiana, *of C——— P——, Va.*

Sleeping, I had a happy dream,
A vision bright of thee,
Methought I saw thine angel face
Beaming with love on me.

And heard thy dear, beloved voice,
As sounding forth it came,
In music tones upon the air,
And sweetly breathe my name

I saw thy lovely form approach,
To greet me with a kiss,
And gazed upon thy loveliness,
Till stupefied with bliss.

Transfixed, I like a statue stood
Carved by some sculptor's art.
Then springing wildly forth, I sought
To clasp thee to my heart.

But now, alas, those eyes of love
No longer on me beam;
I woke in feverish pain to find
'Twas nothing but a dream.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LA NINA.

BY FRANCIS W. BUTMANN.

The city of Fiesole, in the great
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and thin elbows. Then the merry signo
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whose delight was in the signora, cu
murmuring so loudly that they quite
the weak notes of Madame Reiz, and
the distracted *tenore* inconsolable. Aff
in this state, when one day as the
came out, his sleeve was twitched by
girl who led him down an alley to the ri
Sitting on a stone, dipping her long, b
in and out of the water, was another
though somewhat larger, and as she
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"What do you say, signor marquis,
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young man, the Marquis de Napoli, w
against a pillar, heard indifferently the
tirade of Esporo.

"With all my heart," said he, and
his sword-belt, he bowed in the lowes
bend to the rest of the company, and
with the count.

"A silent gauche!" remarked one
as he left.

"Not he," said a lady beside him
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better parts."

"He hath an eye like an eagle," coo

"And his lands are broader than
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"I assure you," said the gentle
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year. After that, five years' travel wit
the cardinal; a year on his estate on
and here he is!"

Meanwhile, the object of these re
striding along with his companion,
city wall. They had wound a sile
about a league, the sunset was gorge
when a shriek and cry for help came
run rapidly forward to where a coach
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P. H. D.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LA NINA.

BY FRANCIS W. HUTMANN.

THE city of Fiesole, in the great duchy of that name, was, at the time of which we write, the chosen resort of all the musical amateurs in the world. Whatever wars were freely waged in other quarters, here all were harmonious, or had been, till the prima donna of La Scala Theatre began to show signs of a waning voice and thin elbows. Then the merry signors, whose delight was in the opera, and the merry ladies, whose delight was in the signors, commenced murmuring so loudly that they quite drowned the weak notes of Madame Retz, and rendered the distracted *tenore* inconsolable. Affairs were in this state, when one day as the manager came out, his sleeve was twitched by a small girl who led him down an alley to the river-bank. Sitting on a stone, dipping her long, brown hair in and out of the water, was another child, although somewhat larger, and as she drew her hair up and down, she warbled, in enchanting accuracy, the most difficult scales of the manager's repertory of themes. Signor Morello stopped thunder-struck. A voice like that in Fiesole, and never before heard by him? A tone like a bell, deep and distinct in the lower notes, and clearer and sweeter in the higher range than Madame Retz had ever attempted, a compass of more than three octaves! That must be attended to. Who had taught her? Cimeriso. It could not have been any one else. That day the child was in the school for a few last exercises, but, probably, lest the city should learn of his treasure ere he was ready to produce it, was as quickly withdrawn and instructed in private, and one year afterwards our story commences.

Flaming placards were everywhere up on public walls and squares, announcing the debut of La Signora Florence, a new prima donna assoluta, in the great opera of the Miracle, upon the Monday of the next week. Criers sung it round the streets and musical counts congratulated the *beau monde* on an acquisition who had been as yet utterly secluded from the gaze of every eye. The old maestro Morello kept his jewel hidden (after having suffered her to sing with his school a few hours a year ago), in some obscurity which not even Œdipus could discover.

"What do you say, signor marquis, to a voyage of discovery concerning this golden fleece?" cried the Count of Esporo to a tall, handsome young man, the Marquis de Napoli, who, leaning against a pillar, heard indifferently the eloquent tirade of Esporo.

"With all my heart," said he, and tightening his sword-belt, he bowed in the lowest possible bend to the rest of the company, and strode out with the count.

"A silent gauche!" remarked one gentleman, as he left.

"Not he," said a lady beside him. "There is no more graceful man in Florence, nor one of better parts."

"He hath an eye like an eagle," cooed another.

"And his lands are broader than an eagle's flight!" interrupted the gentleman, with a laugh.

"Were he not so silent, one could learn a thousand things of his life past and present, though to be sure, being so young, there cannot be much of the former," said the first lady. "How delightfully troublesome is this partial mystery!"

"I assure you," said the gentleman, "he makes no mystery of himself. He has been taught in the college at Rome till his nineteenth year. After that, five years' travel with his uncle, the cardinal; a year on his estate on the Arno; and here he is!"

Meanwhile, the object of these remarks was striding along with his companion, outside the city wall. They had wound a silent way for about a league, the sunset was gorgeous above, when a shriek and cry for help caused them to run rapidly forward to where a coach had been upset in the ruts, and some highwaymen, taking advantage of the opportunity were already busying themselves with its contents and threatening the life of its female occupant. The contest was but momentary ere the road was empty of obstructions, the highwaymen (for there are no more cowardly race of beings than Italian bandits) put to flight, and the coach righted.

"La Nina!" exclaimed the marquis, as coolly wiping his sword blade, he sheathed it, and kissed the fair hand of the rescued lady. "What chance brings thee here?"

"What chance bringeth my lord marquis to save me!" answered the lowest, sweetest voice in the world.

"Some angelic guidance. I shall see thee in the city!"

"Next Tuesday I receive company at the Palazzo Fiorini!"

"Not Monday! La Nina must not miss the great joy we expect. La Signora Florence, the new singer at La Scala, Monday night."

"I shall attend the opera; but under a rather different escort," she answered, with a haughty smile, and thanking her preservers, bade the coachman drive on, while she sank back from their sight within.

"Por Hercule! We came out for a golden fleece," said Esporo, "and we have a whole mine of jewels. By my sword! I never saw so perfect a loveliness in so small a compass in my life! Is't not?"

But the marquis, considerably mortified by the last haughty rejoinder of the lady, did not reply.

"Where didst meet her?" continued Esporo.

"Eh! What if she have more friends than one, can you not say a word? Where did you first meet her?"

"Ah—" said the marquis, as if waking up. "She was left in charge of my aunt, the cardinal's sister, at my estate on the Arno, and I saw her frequently for about six months."

"Bah! and were not ennuied?"

"So? Not I. Books, poesy, draw, dance, drive, hunt; everything but music. The charming thing never could sing or play a note!"

"And you were there constantly all that time?"

"O, much longer! Not regularly though. My aunt, the cardinal's sister, insisted always that I should begone, the first half of every day, on my place a few miles further up the river; then frequently I took a run of a week or so, that she might miss me, wish me back, grow pale, or something."

"And did she?"

"Not she. The same smile, the same indifference. La Nina scarcely could have known my heart, and her coolness was exasperating. At the end of the time that I saw her, I neither knew her station, parentage nor whole name. My aunt always called her La Nina, and I took it up, and the servants added a marchesa on their own responsibility. And now thou hast it!"

"Come!" said Esporo. "We have strayed far enough. What care I for any prima donna assoluta? Is not La Nina before all the world?"

The eyes of the marquis flashed fire. Esporo laughed, and taking his arm they sauntered back.

Monday came. The day so longed for and counted upon. Every box in the theatre had been sold long since. No words were spoken but in reference to the evening. The ladies met and arranged most exquisite toilets; the gentlemen bought most superb bouquets; the jewellers' shops were ransacked; and even the grand duke and his whole train were to be present. Such a night had not shone over Florence for a hundred years; and when at last the sunset gun was fired, and the stars breathed themselves out large and radiant, the air was as clear as on a mountain top. Even a street-sweeper's song was sweet to-night, how sweet then must be the voice of that singer, whose equal Maestro Morello swore Italy had never dreamed of. The street was blocked up with carriages at an early hour, and only as each one disgorged its brilliant contents, could the next find room. Curtain after curtain of the boxes was drawn aside, and beauty after beauty flashed on the accustomed gaze of others. The great chandeliers hung more like blazing concentrations of the solar system than anything else, and crimson, gold and diamonds dazzled the bewildered sight. At last the grand duke and his courtiers thronged the royal boxes, and the orchestra burst forth in music. Though waiting with such eager impatience, the audience had sufficient appreciation to applaud the overture; that master piece of the mighty composer of the Miracle, and the great curtain quivered, parted and swept aside, as was then the custom. Of course they knew they should not see the new prima donna till the opening of the second act, and were quite prepared to see Madame Retz in her decade old attitudes, and hear her thin, cracked tones drawl, and render immortal beauties of conception into dreary platitudes, but with solemn patience they endured it, and only broke out in subdued hisses when the dissonance was more than usually unbearable. How different the enthusiasm, false though it was, which she had inspired ten years before. The Marquis de Napoli and his friend Esporo, was in the box with Madame Avanez, and after scanning every group present, Esporo whispered his belief that La Nina was not anywhere among them, of which remark Napoli took no notice, having already satisfied himself on the point some time before, and biting his lips and cursing the wretched performers, he became resigned to fate, and waited for to-morrow when he might see her.

At last the act was finished without one applaud, and the curtain covered the stage again. The silence was breathless in the interval, the suspense unbearable; ladies leaned forward; cheeks flushed vivid with expectation; even the grand duke stood up uncovered, awaiting; even the most indifferent person present felt his moustache and watched the curtain. It waved, separated, rolled away. On one side great dignitaries appeared seated, the other side was yet vacant; from its distance advanced a group of snow clad bandmaidens, who, separating, disclosed the long vista of a purple porphyry and white marble colonnade. They waited, the audience, they would testify nothing till they were sure. The orchestra played an adagio movement. A white hand appeared from behind the last column, a white foot, a long, black robe, and with a slow, flowing motion, the prima donna assoluta seemed fairly to swim up the distance; from her parted lips seemed to sigh a sound like the far-off warble of the nightingale, which, as she drew nearer, swelled till like a mighty volume of melodious music it broke on the ear as a wave does on the shore, and clearly and sweetly with a solemn force, rose flight after flight, trembled like the wings of a bird far up in blue air, and died away among the clouds as if at the gate of heaven; while standing full before them, her soft, brown hair flowing over her black robe, lustrous gilded-brown eyes upraised, perfectly moulded hands and arms crossed over her bosom, she awaited their judgment.

A moment, as if to regain the breath they had lost in amazement and admiration, dead silence held, then, like thunder in the Apennines, the audience rose with one accord, shouted, applauded, showered flowers and jewels, waved handkerchiefs, smiled, and for some time rendered it impossible to proceed. Stooping, from among the collection, she took a single flower flung by the grand duke, which appeared to be a lily with the dew on it, but, as the weight instantly taught her, formed all of gems, and fastening it in her girdle, bowed and turned away.

"La Nina! La Nina!" cried the wonder-struck Napoli.

She moved slowly to the right and made the marquis an obeisance with the most bewitching smile, who, thus singled out before the house, neither smiled nor blushed, but only bowing, looked steadfastly upon her.

"Brown hair," muttered Esporo, "flowing outline, dainty foot, La Nina herself!"

"Be silent!" whispered the marquis, in a hollow tone, while grasping his arm as if in an iron vice; Esporo winced and did as he was bid.

With the same solemn pathos as it began, the scene ended, the trial was over, and Madame Retz again appeared, only to be hissed till she was joined by La Nina, who, covering her companion's deficiency, lending her an ornament or two from her own abundant stock of expressions, and marvellously executing the most difficult and impossible things, as if she were only breathing, won the respect as much as the admiration of her hearers. The action proceeded and the last scene arrived. Behind a prison grate, resting her cheek on her hand, sat La Nina. The prison bells sent out heavy tollings, the voice of La Nina, deep and rich, mocked their jangling, till, melting into a hymn, it clashed and chimed like an organ; honey dripping from the rocks was not sweeter, and powerful and clear as it was in its deep tones, it fell as lightly and accordantly on the ear as the ringing of hollow, silver bells, so exquisitely was it tempered. The cell filled with the officials of death, and still chanting, she paced out with them. They bound her to the stake; already the torch was applied and little flames leaped up around, while the house, completely carried away, was utterly still, when the withes shrank and broke; the black robe fell down; the white arms were lifted up; shining wings unfolded themselves on her shoulders; long, light drapery floated curlingly around her as she slowly rose above the stake, her voice echoing like reality the air with which she had first appeared. From far above, two angels fell as slowly down to meet her at last, encircling her in their arms, and calmly and beautifully she floated up above the heavens, with her voice swelling and subsiding till it was lost in the upper darkness of her flight, and only a silver echo died, with delicate reverberations, away in the height. So wrapt had the audience been, with their eyes fixed on La Nina, that the stake and fagots with the painted flames and real torch had not received an instant's attention, and the supernumeraries, whose business it was immediately to quench the torch, were equally absorbed. Thus, when a mighty cry of "Fire! Fire! La Scala burns!" went up, and the scaffolding and curtains were already wreathing in tiny flames, judge of the terrific panic and confusion that ensued. Some shouted that the prima donna, who was still above, should be saved, a dozen young nobles indeed made the frantic exertion, others only struggled to extricate themselves. Esporo leapt upon the stage and leapt back again, at an angry word from above, to the side of Madame Avanez, while Napoli rushed wildly forward and shouted her name.

"I am here, signor," answered a voice overhead, coolly, and looking up he saw her sitting on a beam round which she had tied a rope. He ran to mount where she was.

"It is impossible," she cried, "Retz has hidden the ladders, I saw her. Hold this rope, signor," and she flung the other end down to him. He caught it, and instantly clasping it above in her little hands, she threw herself forward from the beam, swung a second, and then slid down beside him, the skin of her hands remaining on the rope. Taking her in his arms, Napoli rushed from the place and gained the street by the stage door. Hardly had he done so, when he was waylaid by another person.

"Whom hast thou?" questioned this last.

"Fare thy ways," returned Napoli, "thy highness must not play the robber with thy subjects!"

"Put La Nina down."

"I shall not be disloyal if I dare to disobey," and Napoli strode onwards leaving the duke behind. At last she stood on her feet in the balcony of his palace.

"Why did La Nina conceal her identity from her friend?" he asked her, reproachfully, and putting his hands on her shoulders with strange familiarity, he held her there till she answered him.

"Il maestro forbade," she murmured.

"And hast thou no will or strength of thine own?"

"As for my will, do not let it concern thee, my strength thou confessest, and beyond these, I owe everything to Morello."

"Didst thou not love me, Florence, when we were together by the Arno?"

No answer.

"I know thou didst. Why then conceal it? Why never blush, never sigh, never be weary, never kindle with my presence, or pale at my absence?"

"I, the singing girl, might never aspire to the Marquis de Napoli's love."

"But thou mightest! thou shalt. Thou hast it!" Still nothing more. "Dost thou love me, La Nina?"

"Ay," and she lifted her brown eyes tremblingly towards him. Suddenly an arm, not his, encircled her, a form was between them, a dozen soldiers drew their swords before her; she was borne off struggling, by the duke and his guards before Napoli could lift his arm. Down the lawns and out into the crowded streets they went, picking their way in the turmoil, lighted glaringly by the burning theatre, to the ducal palace.

"Rest there, pretty dove, sweet singer!" said the duke, as they left her in a high, latticed room, and wound down into the street again.

She ran to the lattice, it was forty feet from the ground; there was but one door, it was fast locked. No flags, no panels, nothing but this comfortable, matter-of fact prison. She had counterfeited this once to night, it came in the force of reality a little too soon. If all the dainty ladies, who had envied her triumph to-night, could but see her now, where would their envy be? True, she remembered, there were very few who would refuse the fate now apparently thrust on herself. She tore violently at the lock and at last wrung her tender hands in despair.

A clang of quick steps on the stairs became audible; a dozen heels in the hall; a bunch of keys rattled without the door, one after another was inserted, suddenly the lock yielded, a small hand, masked and armed, entered, and she was again seized and borne off.

"Trust me," whispered Napoli. "I pass for the duke. He was seen to leave here two minutes since, he is supposed to have returned, and now to be taking his prisoner to some securer place," and they were again in the thorough fares.

"Halt there!" cried a stern, harsh voice, and a short, unarmed man alone, confronted Napoli, and laid his hand on La Nina's head.

"Move on!" commanded the marquis. "Stand aside, Maestro Morello!"

"Nay," pursued the little stranger. "My child, where art thou going? Why leavest thy loving master? Hast thou forgotten thine obligations, thy promise. Wilt thou break thy engagement at the theatre?"

"The theatre is destroyed," murmured La Nina.

"Miserable quibble! Tush! there are a thousand other places till it is rebuilt. El Domo for one."

But she still clung closely to Napoli.

"Thou wilt not? disgraceful girl! Then know that I force thee to leave him, and follow me, by the command of thy father!"

"My father?" asked she, wonderingly, repeating his words with a frightened air, and looking quickly up.

"Ay, child, thy father! If thou never knewest of him before, know it now. Thine own father. Come!"

She slid to her feet and followed him, leaving Napoli grinding his teeth at the sudden reprisals of the night, and the ill-luck that attended them. After an hour's walk in silence, La Nina and Signor Morello found themselves within the Palazzo Fiorini.

"Now," said she, "you will tell me all this that you long since ought to have informed me of. Art thou my father?"

"Nay, he is dead. I am his agent. La Nina, thou art in thine own thought naught but the singing girl of Fiesole. Yet listen. Fifteen years ago, a grand duke was our ruler here, whose equal earth never saw, whose superior heaven alone holds. He had one daughter five years old. One day, suddenly our dear lord died. The child disappeared, was said to have been drowned. Indeed the attempt, although supposed at the time to have been successful, was frustrated by some worthy peasants, whom we know, and she was preserved in secret albeit. The duke's brother took the coronet and now rules. Her existence came to my knowledge; her voice was miraculous. I knew of no way to restore her to her rights other than to perfect her musical education. Florence! Grand Duchess of Fiesole! I will bring thee to thy throne, but La Nina must bide my time!"

She waited an instant, and then said, "I am afraid of greatness. Even if all this is true, I do not desire it. Rather give me the quiet years of happy, Christian life you have just snatched me from!"

"The present duke is a tyrant," said Il Maestro; "he opposes the people, he slew thy father. Hast thou no wish to avenge him? no burning at thy heart to uplift those down-trodden races?"

A long time he thus harangued, setting the merits of the case before her, and promising her stores of greater happiness than she had ever dared wish for, and when at last he left her, La Nina was as determined to obtain her ducal crown and to redress the wrongs of her people, as any Jacobin alive could wish; and in order to accomplish this, was still to continue as the prima donna at another theatre under Signor Morello's management, and her appearance there was shortly announced.

Meantime the Count Esporo was sitting at the feet of Madame Arvanez in a consultation more barbarous than amorous. It will be sufficient to give the end at which they arrived.

"See!" said madame, "how Napoli loves her! how he starts and flushes. It must never be. We cannot lose him so. What will become of our fane tables, our banks, our billiards? It must never be!"

"I cannot forget," muttered Esporo, "his unspoken rebukes to me. His hauteur and overbearing lordliness, nor his insolence. By heaven, I can endure no rival! Yes, let the revenge be quick and deadly!"

"She sings again Thursday at the Domo. We will be there. Do you bring me, when you come, the two bunches of violets. At the last moment, I will impregnate one with the drugs; that one she shall smell, Retz will make sure of that; the other I retain. She will die, as others have died before her!"

"I shall not fail!" and he did not.

When the promised Thursday arrived, the same scene, even if not a more eager one, of impatience and admiration was enacted, and when the noble music of Iphigenie had been rolled off with the classic elegance that but only a pupil of Cimeriso could attain, as they all declared, the Signora Florence was called before the curtain. She obeyed the call, but attired in so superb and singular a costume, as to excite the astonishment and admiration of all; but before her appearance it will be necessary to relate a scene of a minor melodrama that passed in the presence of Madame Avenez.

The Marquis de Napoli had stood half hidden behind the drapery of his own box, and now, leaning slightly forward looked round the house. His gaze turned upon Madame Avanez and Esporo in the box opposite. He saw, as he stood, that madame held a bouquet a little lower than the public view, and from a tiny, perforated casket of gold was saturating the beautiful blossoms with what Napoli did not doubt was deadly poison. When Esporo had bought the two bunches that morning, the marquis had accompanied him, and in the freak of the moment, had bought a similar one, which he now held. Knowing it would be useless to endeavor to warn the prima donna, he lost not a moment in seeking the box of Madame Avanez, and saluting that lady just an instant before La Nina appeared before the curtain, in her dazzling apparel, and gracefully leading Retz to share the applause. The poisoned bouquet lay on the cushion before Madame Avanez, and as the marquis apologized for passing before her vision that he might gain the station at her left, he most adroitly, and entirely unperceived, substituted his own in its place and dropped that upon the floor. Madame Avanez's face was feverish and her eyes blazing, as rising with her cavaliers, she joined in the acclamations of the house; Esporo's countenance expressing a bitter hate joined to a sarcastic sense of power; and a triumphant smile playing round the lips of the Marquis de Napoli.

Bending forward Madame Avanez uttered a laugh so peculiar as to be quite audible and to catch the attention of Retz. This done, she lifted her hand and tossed the bouquet to the stage. Catching it ere it fell, Madame Retz, smiling and throwing back her head, presented it to the unsuspecting singer, who gaily smelled it, and bowed to the donor. Madame Avanez had expected to see the ghastly rigidity of a corpse; here were smiles and life. She stared immovably at the stage a minute, then glanced at Esporo and sank back in her seat. Napoli stooped and picked the poisoned violets from the floor.

"Madame," said he, bowing and holding them out at arm's length, "I must beg forgiveness for the substitution of my own flowers in the place of yours. La Signora Florence did not use the bouquet you intended for her. May I dare prescribe it for yourself!" and placing it on the cushion where he found it, he left the box.

Whether overcome by rage and terror, or by the already penetrating aroma of the subtle drugs, Madame Avanez fainted; and upon being carried into the open air which quickly revived her, was never again seen in Fiesole. Esporo returned to the theatre. The disposition of affairs had undergone a slight change during his absence, but had an earthquake rolled at his feet, he could not have been more overwhelmed. On the front of the stage stood La Nina, as he saw her before in flowing robe and train of white satin and green Genoa velvet. On her head was a magnificent crown. True she was thus arrayed, and as he thought singularly, before he went out; six giants of the royal guard stood behind her; the little maestro, with the lord chancellor of the duchy were rather in advance, and the Marquis de Napoli, holding her hand, was by her side. Retz and the other myrmidons had vanished. An expression of joy and amazement was on the countenances of the thousands who thronged the place, and the grand duke was standing in his half-deserted box, purple with rage and trembling. The little maestro's voice rang like a trumpet as he rehearsed the circumstances with which the reader is already acquainted, with a particularity impossible of admitting a doubt, and called up witness after witness. At last the duke seemed able to command his voice and a word sprang to his lips.

"It is naught," he roared. "Where are my guards? Seize the liars! the impostors!"

But the cunning little maestro, too well used to deploying his theatrical forces, and to obtaining a thousand things by stratagem alone, had not left a single guard free to obey the duke's command.

"Is this naught, thou usurper!" cried Morello; and taking from the hand of La Nina a scroll of parchment, he unrolled, displayed and read a mandate from the pope, sealed with the golden bull, and declaring Florence the rightful and only ruler, Grand Duchess of Fiesole.

The grand duke bent forward, white, where just now he was purple, a red stream flowing from his lips; his demoniacal passions had slain him, and apoplexy had taken off its victim. He was dead.

"My people!" said Florence, no longer La Nina, advancing a step with Napoli, while the others fell back, "although my father was your duke, not without your own will and election will I take his place." And all the assembly hurraed, and the words were taken up by the surging populace without, who had already heard the intelligence.

"Long live our prima donna! Long live Florence, Arch-Duchess of Fiesole!"

Thus it came that the nightingale sitting on an olive spray, together with the noble arms of the Napoli, were quartered on the escutcheon of the oldest and greatest of Italian houses.

SELLING A GOSSIP.

"Have you heard the story about number 288?" inquired the facetious Mr. C., addressing his fun-loving neighbor, B.

"No, I have not," replied B; "let us have it."

"It is too gross," remarked B., hesitatingly.

"O, never mind, I can stand it; let me have it by all means," eagerly exclaimed B.

"I tell you it is too gross."

"All the better, it will just suit me; I like such jokes; just shut the door there and let me hear it."

"Can't do that, for G. stands there listening to hear me sell you."

"Well, if you're going to *sell* me, I should like to know *how* you're going to do it. Let's hear what your 288 is that's too gross."

"You *have* heard it twice already," replied C., with a grin. "I tell you 288, being twice 144, is *two gross*.—*Life Illustrated*.

HUMAN FOOD.

The Tunguses, near Ochotsk, and the natives of Kamtschatka, eat a description of fine white clay, resembling butter; and in the Eastern Ocean, the same earth is put into loaves, and thus swallowed. In Samarang, Java, a well known earth called tana, is sold in the market, in skilfully curled rolls. All through the tropics, in fact, and in hot countries, there seems to prevail a fondness for certain varieties of earth. In Europe, the use of clay or earth has frequently been resorted to in time of famine. Germany saw it employed during the thirty years' war; and as late as 1793, necessity drove suffering men to mix it with rye and oats in their bread.—*Home Journal*.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

WAITING.

BY WILLIS E. PAGE.

The shadows gather darker tints,
That drape the green, embowered road
That leads to Cecile's sweet abode—
A road my footstep often prints.

I know the gate all open swings—
I know that 'neath the maple tree
Before that gate—she waits for me,
Amid the summer's blossomings.

She waits for me! though thought be swift,
Yet swifter shall my footsteps speed,
Until at Cecile's feet I plead,
A suppliant for a life-long gift.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE MYSTERIOUS PLEDGE.

BY MRS. L. S. GOODWIN.

A MISERABLE, worthless fellow!"

"Hush! there goes his sister, Alice."

Alice Wentworth heard; let any affectionate young heart imagine such epithets bestowed—*deservedly*—on the object dearest to it in the world, and sympathize with the poor girl. She felt dizzy and suffocating, whirling through the air rather than walking on the ground. With instinctive desire to escape listening to further stigmatizing of her unfortunate brother, she almost ran past the village store; afterwards slackening her pace as suddenly, for the person on whose account she suffered was preceding her homeward, and only too visibly in a violent, unapproachable mood.

Allston Wentworth was the twin brother of Alice; they had been orphans several years, and their parents left no children besides themselves. The brother and sister were fondly attached to each other; in earlier life each had seemed necessary to the other's daily existence. Their meeting, when both had completed their studies, to return together to the home of their childhood, was a joyful occasion joyfully anticipated. All the village were delighted, too, at seeing the sweet cottage down by the brookside re-opened at length; and they may be pardoned for the pride they felt in the young proprietors. Allston had graduated with distinction, he possessed every personal advantage; Alice was the perfect answering of an angel mother's prayer.

Old acquaintances and friends as they dropped in one by one to welcome them back, never failed to comment with satisfaction on the growth of the place, and its increase in business during the period of their absence. Gentle Miss Wentworth did not gainsay what she heard so often repeated; yet all the while she was silently analyzing facts, and questioning whether the change referred to, could in truth be termed a progress.

Mr. Coggles's former small store of dry goods and miscellaneous articles presented an imposing new front—all very fine, till we come to consider the enlargement as in order to establish a liquor-selling department; it was the profit of this department which had shortly enabled its proprietor to lay through a field of his a new street that received his name, and grace the same with some half a score of pleasant looking, though shammily constructed dwellings, advertised—"For sale or to let." Families flocked in like martens to a box in spring; and it is doubtful if all acted with nobler forethought than the birds. Many of these new comers had no regular employment for themselves, but together they furnished a business finely lucrative to their landlord at his bar.

Yes, it did have a thriving aspect, so considerable a number of teams belonging to every quarter of the town, and adjacent towns drawn up at sunset around the store; but if the illusion was to be preserved, one must not sit up to mark at what hour or with how steady hands, those teams were driven away homeward.

Tracing the stream to the fountain head, Alice was speedily convinced that the waters, however grateful they might appear, would prove bitter to as many as tasted. Alas! the sister of Allston was doomed to feel the correctness of her judgment.

At college the young man had somewhat relaxed in principle, had been what is called "a little wild." He numbered at the wine parties in the students' rooms—that is, during the last year of his course; and at certain other midnights would have been in no danger of losing his life had the buildings taken fire and consumed over the heads of the gravely dreaming professors.

It was only having a little "fun;" that fun he was missed when he got beyond it. With all the love he felt for his sister, home was found insufferably dull; the ready resource was accepted. Evening by evening saw him at the general rendezvous—Mr. Coggles's store.

At first he scarcely more than passed a couple of hours, relating anecdotes and laughing at those he heard, with the more respectable class of the assembly; retiring quite early—that is to say, by ten o'clock, and with no other mark of the peculiar influence of the place than a slightly scented breath.

In vain Alice exercised all her sisterly arts to win him from temptation and ruin; he persisted in his chosen course, and descended by rapid gradations. She was left to her loneliness more and more; and whatever portion of his time he had spent at home, Allston in his present estate was little companionable. A tree with the fire of intemperance burning at the root, his beautiful foliage was fast withering, his tender and graceful branches falling with the scathing away of the the life sap.

As a measure to effectually intimidate his sister from entreaties and expostulations, he assumed towards her a bearing rigid and distant; coming and going without salutation or adieu, and sitting moody and reserved over their meals together. The oldtime affection, the gaiety, the mutual confidences were on his part repudiated and repelled. In a year from the time of their return, the walls within which the children drew their first breath, and the parents their last, had been desecrated by the entrance of the promising student with the mumbling lip, idiotic eye and lurching gait of the drunkard.

To one his example served as a warning and a summons. At the giving way of the ice beneath his feet, Henry Clifton, long a familiar and devoted friend to Allston, retreated in time to save himself; stretched an earnest hand to assist the perilled, and raised a cry of alarm to the throng rushing headlong on in the same track.

Clifton, two or three years the senior of Allston Wentworth, had lately succeeded to his father's practice in the town as a physician; hitherto he had been exceeding popular among all classes, both as a citizen and in his profession; but when he drew up a temperance pledge and right eloquently pressed men to give it their signature, he heard himself branded "fanatic" on every hand, and met everywhere sneers and contempt.

He suddenly had plenty of leisure; his horse grew fat in the stall, and may have thought his master was permitting him in a mass the several Sabbaths on which he had carried him the round of his patients before. Doctor Thompson and Waitt, from neighboring towns, both liberal patronizers of Mr. Coggles's bar, as often as they came that way, divided his practice between them.

But Clifton was stanch; he held aloft the standard in the face of the enemy, and gradually a few, a very few, rallied around it. Others longed to do the same, but the fetters of the tyrant upon them were too strong to be broken at will. Allston's motto had been "No danger!" it was changed to "No deliverance!" His ambition and energy of purpose seemed dwindled away; he nearly judged himself unworthy of manhood, and felt wholly unequal to moral contest. Clifton labored indefatigably for his salvation, and found in the beautiful though mournful eyes of Alice turned upon him in gratitude, an exceeding great reward.

It was a raw, November twilight; Alice closed the cottage and walked up past the store where her brother was certain to be; not with any definite idea concerning him, but because the solitariness of her home was unendurable and her feelings led her that way. She had turned and was retracing her sad steps, when Allston was seen to hurl himself out at the door of the store followed by gusty jeers. He half-turned, shook his clenched right hand with a wordy defiance; then with unsteady step went away homeward, gesticulating to himself, and muttering like the north wind that sweeps across the hill.

One of a group of loungers at the outer angle of a fence just by, gazing after Allston, spoke of him as miserable—worthless; and a companion hushed him out of respect to Miss Wentworth, as told at the beginning of our story. They, as yet in the remote circles of the maelstrom, never conceived of danger to themselves; nor considered that the sinking victim whom they contemplated with scorn and disgust, was shortly since in this same higher degree.

Dissension comes out of intemperance, as the enormous serpent Python was bred in the slime of the earth. That afternoon the fast horse Niagara, which Wentworth lately bought for a large sum, had trotted for a purse with Prairie Mare, owned by the captain jockey of the county. The latter had won. The prize was but small, and in itself no matter of importance to Niagara's master, who, if he was not immensely rich, had only to spend six cents in order to believe so; but he had boasted and his comrades had betted, therefore to be defeated in the trial was extremely unpleasant and mortifying.

All hands returned to Coggles's, and while they unsparingly "refreshed," the triumphant jockey purposely irritated his competitor by repeated taunts, which members not involved relished quite too well for Wentworth's liking. He at length launched forth general anathemas, and accused the judges of the race of falsifying in his disfavor. This excited a storm of hisses and gibes, when the subject was fortunately moved upon to quit the scene, which he did.

Alice followed her brother home; as she entered the hall, he with a candle in his hand reached the head of the staircase and passed round the balustrade to his own chamber. His unusually early return suggested illness; but she could venture no intermeddling. Retiring shortly to her chamber, which was next her brother's, she sat for an hour listening for some token from him; then, re-assured by the continued quiet, she offered a prayer for him, strong in desire though weak in faith, and closed her tearful eyes on the pillow.

Next morning, Allston awoke impressed by a dream, as he thought. It seemed that in the middle of the night his mother appeared in the room, clad in white, took from a table at the head of his bed a small Bible which always lay there—her dying gift, and inscribed on a fly-leaf with his name in her own hand—and turning full towards the bed, said, solemnly:

"My son, you have again and again refused to sign the pledge, which alone can save you. I am come to perform the act for you, which you have not the courage to perform for yourself. Here I will write a pledge and annex it with your name."

She opened the book at the first fly-leaf and wrote. The motion of her hand, defined to the son intently looking on, every word as it was penned.

"PLEDGE.—By this volume twice sacred, as the Word of Holiness and the best token of a mother's love, I do herewith declare that I will taste intoxicating liquors no more while I live.

"ALLSTON WENTWORTH."

She closed the Bible and restored it to its place, looked again upon him with an angel's smile, and disappeared.

The particulars, faintly recollected at first, came presently back with bewildering distinctness. Without designing it, Allston thrust forth a hand from beneath the coverlid and grasped the little Bible. Many weeks he had forborne to open it, for the last time he did so, it said to him—"Look not thou on the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." This doctrine was troublesome to him, so the volume containing it was put permanently aside.

Now he lifted the cover, and, transfixed with astonishment, beheld the realization of his dream. There was the pledge in exact simile of his mother's chirography; the most careful comparison would fail to discover between it and the inscription upon the opposite page, any difference save that, while the last was faded and half-effaced by time, the first looked fresh and scarce dry from the pen.

Half an hour later, as Dr. Clifton was pulling some late vegetables in his garden, Allston advanced to the wall which divided their grounds, and leaning upon it accosted him:

"Have you the pledge in your pocket this morning, Henry? I believe you commonly carry it about you?"

The person addressed started upright from his employment, and after a moment, slowly approached the speaker with eyes fixed upon his face, searching whether some expression there did not contradict the strange sincerity of his tones.

"Yes, I have it," he at length replied.

"Because," rejoined Allston, "I am now ready to sign it—though it can make no difference with me."

In speechless wonder the doctor produced the paper; the other was prepared with pen and ink; the pledge was returned with the signature of Allston Wentworth, traced as boldly as Hancock's upon the Declaration of Independence—and, truly, such a declaration it was to him. He then turned and walked calmly and firmly back to the cottage.

Thenceforward in the moral sentiment of the place there was a perceptible change. The foul weed was not immediately plucked up by the roots, but it was mown down; and the bare stump which alone rose above the ground, with the strong sunlight of truth and conscience falling on it, slowly weltered. The combined influence of two such men as Clifton and Wentworth, wisely exerted, could not fail of being ultimately potent.

Through them manufactures were established in the village, providing an increasing population with remunerative labor; also a store, furnished them the necessaries of life away from the poison which induces misery and death. Men whom Mr. Coggles had, by the temptation he set before them, and the merciless foreclosure of mortgages in all instances possible, reduced from comfort to wretchedness, began substantially to thrive again. The lyceum and social temperance meeting succeeded to gatherings at the dram shops.

The vender of ardent spirits finding his customers few, and these chiefly of the non-paying class; and, moreover, himself grown more obnoxious in the community than even the earliest opponent of the traffic had been, took the sum of his ill-gotten gains—being much smaller than he had hoped to make it—and retired upon a farm in another township.

But in this I have anticipated.

Three weeks subsequent to signing the pledge, Allston had revealed to no one the apparently supernatural agency by which he was saved, and adhered to the resolution that while it so appeared, it should be kept a secret in his own breast. The Bible was hidden carefully away from his sister's sight.

"Was it Emma Clifton who spent the night with you?" the young man inquired of his sister, while one morning at breakfast they chatted as of yore.

"Neither she nor any one; what gave you the idea?"

"Why, I heard your voice—it must have been very late—you was talking and laughing—and then your door opened and shut several times."

"You must have been deceived; I never slept better."

Allston recollected that his sister when quite young had a habit of walking in her sleep whenever her mind happened to be particularly impressed. He said no more, but when within a few nights after, he was awakened by Alice's leaving her room singing, he rose cautiously and looked into the hall. With a countenance radiantly happy, the girl paced backward and forward, chanting a hymn of praise which had been an especial favorite with their mother. Alice had a sweet, well-cultivated voice, and the soul of the listener thrilled to the endeared melody poured forth all unconsciously. Nothing ever had so perfectly recalled to his waking vision a departed mother's image; and this reflection instantly associated the somnambulist with the midnight pledge.

It was not long before his suspicion was corroborated; for re-entering her chamber, without closing the door, she placed her lamp upon a desk and sitting down began writing in a hand very unlike her own, and a perfect fac simile of their mother's. Standing just behind her, Allston looked on till the whole of the hymn he had heard sung was committed to paper; she then rose up, returned the sheet to the desk, shut her door, extinguished the light, and retired to her couch.

The following evening just after tea, Alice, remarking to her brother that she would write a letter, went to her room. She shortly returned in much agitation, which she made an effort to conceal, taking a seat where her face could not be plainly observed. At length she spoke:

"Allston, do you not think our mother had a peculiar handwriting?"

"Rather so," he replied; "few now-a-days take the trouble to accomplish themselves so far in the art."

"Did you ever see any one who wrote at all like her?"

"I may have."

"I am sure that I never have; I have studied many a time to imitate, but never succeeded to the extent of a single line."

"Probably not; but what leads you to speak of it now? you seem excited."

"Well—it would not be strange if I am so. Because—why, brother, on opening my desk to-night, I found the hymn she used to sing so often—

'When all thy mercies, O, my God,'

written in her own hand and none other's, upon paper that I purchased scarce a week ago. You will presently believe me, Allston; for see! here it is—examine it."

"I have seen it before," said Allston, with a calm smile. "And I will show you something, likewise of recent date, which will exactly compare."

Bringing from his chamber the little Bible, he showed her the pledge, which to him was no longer a mystery. Alice was only the more astonished, till her brother explained all.

"You see the wonder is perfectly clear and rational now," he added; "and yet I shall always regard this pledge as somewhat a miracle; must not the spirit of our sainted mother have directed your act! Dearest Alice, you have saved your brother, and never henceforward, God helping, will he fail of being to you a brother indeed."

While they lingered over the subject with moist eyes, Dr. Clifton and his younger sister came in for an hour's sociality. Emma blushed when on being congratulated upon her rapidly improving health, which during the last year she had nearly lost, her brother glanced at Allston with a quickly significant smile. The latter, nothing disturbed to see his place by Alice's side familiarly usurped, led the fair sister of Henry to a window at the opposite end of the room, where he spoke to her in low, earnest tones, reading her pure face by the moon's silver light.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LETTER NO. XIII.

Paris, June 26, 1856.

M. M. BALLOU:—Dear Sir,—We left London last Thursday noon, in the cars, and found the boat waiting for us at the pier when we reached New Haven. This boat was an affair that any company might truly be ashamed of. The ladies' cabin was about six by ten, and would not accommodate with room to lie down more than half the ladies on board, most of whom were very sea-sick. The motion of the boat in crossing the Channel is far more disagreeable than on the Atlantic, and very few who cross escape without some severe qualms. However, it is only for six hours, and can be easily endured for that length of time.

We reached Dieppe at nine in the evening. It was dark and rainy, and what with the French officials and the confusion of landing, we came near losing our identity; but finally found ourselves safe in an omnibus for the railway station, having passed the custom-house without difficulty. Speaking French in Paris is quite another thing from speaking French at a boarding-school in America, and though I can make myself somewhat understood, I can comprehend but little of the fast French conversation. Still, if one understands but a very little, one can get along in Paris, for the inhabitants are so accustomed to the visits of the English that they have acquired a way of making themselves understood; and in the towns on the coast of the Channel, most of them can speak a little English.

The train was to start at ten, but travelled so very slowly that we did not reach Paris until six the next morning. The French night cars are the easiest I have seen anywhere. The seats are very broad, and there are cushioned elbow rests and rests for the head, that are very convenient, so that one can sleep quite comfortably. Still we were not sorry to draw near to Paris.

The first things that we could distinguish as we approached the walls, were the towers of *Notre-Dame*, and the Arch of Triumph. The iron horse, however, did not stop for us to contemplate them, and we were soon landed in the vast depot. I never so fully realized as then, how very perplexing it must have been at Babel, when people found they could not understand each other. We succeeded at last in getting a coachman to take us to a hotel, who charged us out of three times what he ought to have received. But who ever knew a cabman to do otherwise with a stranger?

I was much surprised, during the ride, to see the women, bareheaded, sweeping and cleaning the streets; carrying heavy burdens; wheeling hand-carts, and engaging in the most laborious occupations. It would do an advocate of "woman's rights" an incalculable amount of good to see the rights and privileges of these French women.

Our first effort at sight-seeing in Paris, was the Louvre, with its paintings, and museums, and statuary, and antiquities of all sorts. But we found it too much to be even glanced at in a day. We have spent many an hour there since, and have not been much more than half through it. Louis Napoleon has added some valuable articles to the collection, and some not very valuable; among the latter, a marble bust of himself. He has also completed the splendid buildings that connect it with the Tuileries Palace. No one who has not seen these buildings, can form any idea of their extent and magnificence. Almost the first idea that is fully impressed upon one's mind in Paris, is, that there are more soldiers in it than anything else. They flock upon the pavements, they fill the places of amusement, the restaurants and cafes, and there is a detachment of them, more or less numerous, guarding with guns and swords, every public building, and gate, and almost every corner. Many of them are the Zouaves, with their turbaned heads, and swarthy faces, dressed entirely in Turkish costume. They are a villanous-looking set of men, but except when drunk, seem to be tolerably quiet.

I am convinced that one of the most useful institutions in Paris, for the hasty visitor, is its omnibuses. They are much longer and wider than those of New York or London; the seats are all divided by elbow rests, so that crowding is impossible. They will accommodate eighteen, and in every one there is some machinery, representing a clock face with one hand, which registers the number of passengers, so that cheating is impossible.

If the omnibus which you enter does not go to the place you wish to reach, you have only to ask for a corresponding ticket for the omnibus which does go there, and six cents pays for your ride in both, or for a third beside, if that is necessary for your destination. This system is the most complete of any city in the world, and as excellent as it is complete.

But Paris is an expensive city to live in. I had imagined that dress material, at least, could be procured for less money here, than anywhere else, but a greater mistake could scarcely be made. Almost any article of clothing may be bought one third cheaper in London than in Paris, and some of the prices here are perfectly enormous. Even embroidered collars and worked muslins are double the price here that they are in London.

The *waists* of the French ladies fill me with horror. I never saw *lacing* carried to such a frightful extent anywhere. How they can think that the waspishness to which they reduce themselves is beautiful, I cannot imagine, when they have statues of the most exquisite beauty of form before them continually in the Tuileries and Luxembourg gardens. But the truth is, that nature is banished from Paris, and art and artifice reign in its stead. I cannot but wonder where they shut up all the children. In London every other woman carries a baby, or leads one or two children. There you see them of all ages, from three months old and upwards, but a baby or a child is a rare sight in Paris streets. There are generally a few in the Luxembourg gardens of an afternoon, but even on them this system of tight lacing had commenced, so that they are rather miniature ladies than children.

There is very little respect paid to the rules of propriety in the streets of Paris, and no lady, it seems to me, can reside here very long, and become perfectly accustomed to French habits, without losing her modesty entirely. French women are not troubled with modesty. It is strange how soon one may see all the "lions" of Paris, if one is but an experienced sight-seer. For myself, I shall be quite content to quit Paris in a week, and shall never have a solitary longing to return to it again.

We have visited the churches, the cemeteries, palaces, the Garden of Plants, the public gardens and promenades, the Foundling Hospital and the Manufactory of the Gobelin tapestries, and all the minor sights in the line of columns, statues, fountains and places of historical interest. Of all these, the Foundling Hospital and the Gobelin tapestries are the most interesting and remarkable, and I shall describe them to you in my next. Yours respectfully, J. P. B.

News Glances.

BOSTON AT THE CLOSE OF THE REVOLUTION.—The principal manufactures of Boston in 1784 were rum, loaf sugar, cordage, spermaceti candles, and potash. In 1774 there were 29 distil-houses in Boston, but in 1784 only 26. In the latter year there were 8 sugar houses and 9 ropewalks; 4 houses for the manufacture of spermaceti candles, and 3 potash works. So we learn from an old newspaper.

THE ARMY.—The army of the United States consists (1855) of the general in chief, 951 commissioned officers of various grades, and 9794 non-commissioned officers, musicians, artificers and privates; making a total of 10,745. The whole territory of the United States is divided into five great departments, in which there are twenty-six arsenals, and ninety-eight forts, most of which are garrisoned.

TAKING IT COOLLY.—We saw a fellow, yesterday, says the Pittsburgh Journal, taking a snooze on the Alleghany wharf, with his feet in the water, and his head on a board pile. He did not look as though he was in the habit of touching cold water often.

ARTIFICIAL CRYSTAL.—Two savans of France, Senormont and Becquerel, have obtained surprising results in the artificial formation of crystals and minerals. Some among their specimens of crysalite and cryoberyl are hard enough to cut glass.

CURIOUS.—An old scrub of a peach tree in Plympton, Mass., which was entirely buried in a snow drift during the last winter, is well laden with fruit, while upon scarcely another tree on the farm is a peach to be seen.

SENSIBLE.—The Emperor of China, instead of paying the doctor as we do when we are unwell, the instant he is taken ill, stops the pay of his physicians, and does not renew it until he is quite well again.

THE DIFFERENCE.—A waggish spendthrift said—"Five years ago I was not worth a cent in the world; now see where I am through my own exertions." "Well, where are you?" "Why, I owe more than three thousand dollars."

SAD.—A down east paper says that during a thunder-storm, in the vicinity, recently, a man and three telegraph poles were knocked down by a thunderbolt, and remained insensible nearly half an hour.

HOBSON'S CHOICE.—Mr. F. Plummer Hobson was married in Richmond, Va., on the 9th ult., to the daughter of Governor Wise of that State.

FLIRTATION.—A poetical young midshipman, being called upon to describe Flirtation, compared it to "hugging the shore of the United States."

PASSIONATE.—A horse was killed in New Bedford, recently, by a blow from a whip stock, in the hands of an exasperated teamster.

SWARTWOUTISM.—A county treasurer in western New York, is said to be a defaulter to the extent of $25,000, and has "vamosed."

SWEDES.—Within the last ten years, twenty thousand Swedes and Norwegians have found homes in this country.

EXPRESSION.—A beautiful smile is to the female countenance what the sunbeam is to the landscape.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

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GHOSTS AND SPIRITS.

We have sometimes thought that the bright light of science in the present day, the strength of mind of which we all boast, above all, the materialistic tendencies of the age, had swept away all lingering belief in spectral appearances and ghostly visitations. But there is a lurking belief in almost every man's mind that such things may be—that we may meet the shadowy images of the lost on earth, returned to this sphere once more to express their love, to give their counsel, or threaten vengeance. Many a man well read-up in Scott's Demonology and Witchcraft, and Brewster's Natural Magic, who in broad day or by bright gas light, and in good company, will adduce reasons "plenty as blackberries" to show that such a belief is absurd, will tacitly confess the power of the superstition if he chance to be obliged to pass through a lonely graveyard at midnight—

"—— That witching hour of night,
When churchyards yawn and goblins vex the sight."

In the good old times—nay, not so old either, for, "by'r lady!" we can remember them—a ghost story was the choicest entertainment of a winter evening fireside. When the hickory logs were blazing in the wide fireplace, and the chairs were drawn around the focus of warmth in a cozy semi-circle, and the rattle of the sleet on the windows added to the sense of comfort in the gathered circle, then a genuine ghost story from the lips of an experienced narrator was certain, in theatrical parlance, to "bring down the house." The younger portion of the company were very critical. They were not suited if the spectre turned out to be a clown in a sheet, with a bottle of phosphorus to make the "blue blazes," and an ox-chain to do the rattling—such sham ghosts were invariably hooted out of good society. No! we demanded a genuine phantom, that could go through a key-hole as easily as a church-door, and who finally vanished like a whiff of smoke, leaving behind a suspicious smell of brimstone. It was nice fun for a boy to go to-bed alone after such a mental regalement.

Openly most men profess a disbelief in the whole spectral race; secretly, almost unconsciously, they are credulous. Whittier says, "It was a part of the wild faith of the Scandinavian worshippers of Odin. It gave a mournful beauty to the battle songs of the Erse and Gallic bards. It shook the stout heart of the ancient Roman. It blended with all the wild and extravagant religions of the East. How touching is that death-scene of Cyrus, as told by Xenophon, when the dying monarch summoned his children about him, entreating them to love one another, and to remember that their father's ghost would be ever at their side, to rejoice with their rejoicing, and sorrow with their sorrow! All nations, all ages, as Cicero justly affirms, have given credit to this ghost-doctrine; and this fact alone, Dr. Johnson argues, fully confirms it The doctor himself believed in the ghost of Cock-lane. Luther saw, talked and fought with spirits. Swedenborg made them his familiar acquaintances. Coleridge, and his friend, the apostle of the unknown tongues, were spectre seers. Against so much authority shall we urge the apparently common-sense view of the subject, that the apparition of a disembodied spirit to the sensual organs of sight, hearing and touch, is a solecism in philosophy—a supervision of all known laws of matter and mind? What will that avail with the man who has actually seen a ghost? Fact before philosophy always. If the man is certain he has seen the thing, there is an end to the matter. 'Seeing,' as the old adage has it, 'is believing.' Disbelief under such circumstances would justly subject him to the charge which pious Father Baxter brought against those who doubted in relation to Cotton Mather's witches—' He must be an obstinate Sadducee who questions it.'" It was an appeal to this lurking superstition that gave to Mrs. Radcliffe's romances such a hold on the popular mind of the last generation; and it is the secret of success with many a charlatan and quack, so untrue is it that—

"The last find bleeding picture of the brain.
The churchyard ghost, is laid to rest again."

CUBA AND SPAIN.—Spain derives a revenue of nearly three millions of dollars from the island of Cuba. Moreover, the principal insular officials pay the Spanish government a large percentage of their emoluments to retain their offices.

UNSEXED WOMEN.

The condition of woman in the nineteenth century, compared to that of the middle ages, bears the same relation that light does to darkness. Woman has triumphantly asserted her equality with man. She moves forward with him, side by side, in the ambitious career of honorable fame and high mental culture. She is no longer derided for her lofty aspirations; she is no longer condemned to a life of ignorance by unmanly and unmeaning sneers about blue stockingism, that once visited every effort at feminine culture. She is allowed, even by the cynical of the ruder sex, to have a soul. Her judgment is expert as well as her taste acknowledged. In literary pursuits she has achieved triumphs, in the light of which the laurels of man seem almost fading. The most successful books of the day are from female pens. Woman, too, has penetrated the arcana of science, and can show her collegiate diplomas as mistress of arts, as well as mistress of hearts, and many a fair one has acquired the legitimate right to wield the scalpel and the lancet, and to heal the wounds of the body as well as to inflict wounds on the heart. But while the sex thus presses forward in a high career, there are not wanting those who are not content with a legitimate progress as women, but must play the parts properly assigned to men, and which can only be done by putting aside the proprieties and delicacy of the female sex. We have no sympathy with such eccentricities. On the contrary, we experience an aversion to female sailors, female soldiers, and female coachmen. In this country, we have had several specimens of these unsexed women, but the folly is not confined to this country. Europe has more than one Lola Montez. As a specimen of what ladies sometimes do when they forget the proprieties of their sex, we will relate the following true story, which occurred in Konigsberg, Prussia:

Mme. Louise Lehmann, the young and lovely widow of a captain of the Lancers, not long since came and took up her residence in that city. Soon after, she adopted manners quite masculine; dressed as a man, rode man-fashion on horseback, smoked cigars and a pipe, frequented the restaurants, cafes, and eating-houses, played at billiards, sported in the pistol galleries—in fine, played the genteel rowdy to a charm. She had happened several times to visit the Cafe of the Crown, at which the professors of the University are in the habit of meeting, one of whom, the Dean of the Theological Faculty, was greatly scandalized by her proceedings, and urged the master of the establishment to refuse to receive her any more. The latter wrote to the lady a letter, in which he begged she would not again repeat her visit to his establishment. She was greatly enraged at this exclusion, and learning that Professor T—— was the cause of it, she resolved to take signal vengeance for the insult, and soon put it into execution. One evening when the professor, an old man of sixty, was seated by himself at a table in the cafe, Mme. Lehmann, dressed as a man, entered the cafe, whip in hand, and cut in a merciless manner with her whip-lash, the face of the venerable professor of theology. As may well be imagined, she was immediately arrested and conducted to prison, and three days after, the criminal tribunal sentenced her to pay a fine of 800 thalers ($640). The director of the police also prohibited her again appearing in man's apparel. From this last decision the lady appealed to a higher court, which decided, after examining into the case, that as neither the laws nor ordinances forbade women from wearing man's apparel, any woman in Prussia had a right to dress so, if she pleased, but inasmuch as the frequency of such a custom would, as in the present case, cause much scandal, the authorities had a right to prohibit them from so dressing.

A LIBEL.

"They fine ye for everything ye do in Borsn (Boston)," said a Philadelphia loafer to his friend. "There was a feller from Virginny a little while ago, who came out of his hotel in Borsn a smokin' his se-gar. A po-lice orsifer stepped up to him an' told him to put out his se gar. *Virginny* feller thought he was a joking, and went a smokin' round the corner. The po-lice orsifer came up agin, and says he, 'I'll take your fine if you please.' 'How much is it?' says the Virginny feller. 'Five dollars for smokin' in Borsn streets,' says the orsifer. The feller put his hand in his pocket and took out a ten spot and handed it to him. The po-lice orsifer took out the five-dollar change and handed it to the stranger. 'No matter for the change,' says the Virginny feller, 'I may want to chaw a piece of tobacco bimeby, and the V may go agin that charge.'"

CRUEL.—A Schenectady paper, speaking of the effects of a squall on a canal-boat, says: "When the gale was at the highest, the unfortunate craft heeled to larboard, and the captain and another cask of whiskey rolled overboard."

CHINA.—The insurgents are still going ahead in China. They have captured city after city, and the imperialists are now shaking in their shoes at the prospect of the complete success of the revolution.

MUSICAL.—Max Maretzek has leased the Academy of Music at New York for three years, at $22,000 per year, and is about engaging some of the first talent in Europe for the next season.

LUCKY.—In ten months, Signora Parodi, the singer, and Strakosch have cleared $50,000 by concerts. They were last heard of concerting in New York State.

INGENIOUS.—A mechanic of New York has hammered out a statue of Washington from a sheet of copper.

WATERING PLACES.—The various springs in Virginia are now well attended by company.

VERY TRUE.—Indolence often assumes the appearance of patience.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

The story that idols are manufactured at Birmingham, Eng, for exportation, is denied.

They have just heard in London of the disinterment of the remains of Gen. Joseph Warren.

Mr. Crampton is very well treated in England by the government officials.

A new line of steamers have been established to run between Liverpool and St. John's.

Mr. Macauley's forthcoming life of Dr. Samuel Johnson will be a treat.

The Czar has presented Louis Napoleon with a cannon of his own invention.

While Austria has a potential voice, all hopes of Italian liberty are vain.

"I love the silent *watches* of the night," said the thief that robbed the jeweler.

It is said that a woman's education is not completed till she can ride, shoot or swim.

Boiling shingles in lime and salt will preserve them from decay for years.

A Tartar bride is obliged to pull off her husband's boots in sign of subjection.

Powder Horn Hill, Chelsea, was lately sold to a company for $6000.

If Great Britain continues to annex, she will absorb all Asia.

A large trade in broom corn is sprung up between Chicago and Canada.

Giovenni Gorelli, a Tuscan sculptor, carved busts after he was blind.

The first Christian church was established in the holy city of Jerusalem.

Literary originality has been defined as undetected imitation.

More than sixteen hundred Chinese immigrants have lately arrived in California.

The total length of the streets in London is seventeen hundred and sixty miles.

Two men of sixty have married girls of less than twenty, lately, in Boston.

If you would take a pup at sunshine, look in a young mother's face.

A New York house keeps its rooms cool by fans worked by steam.

One drop of thought and a bushel of bubble make a popular lecture.

The present Sultan is a patron of art, though the Koran prohibits pictures.

During the witchcraft delusion the English burned 30,000 women.

"DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP!"

What a glorious motto Lawrence furnished to his countrymen when he uttered these words!—"Don't give up the ship." The spirit that prompted it was the same which years before animated Paul Jones in the terrific battle of the Bon Homme Richard and Serapis. In the heat of the action the English captain hailed Paul to know if he had struck. "Struck!" retorted Paul, undauntedly, though his scuppers were running blood, and the water was pouring into the shot holes; "struck! I haven't begun to fight yet." *He* had no idea of "giving up the ship." It is related of the terrible and victorious Tamerlane that, in the early part of his career, when closely pursued by his enemies, he took refuge among some ruins, and there mused despondingly upon the apparently hopeless aspect of his position. While thus engaged his attention was attracted by the proceedings of an ant, which was struggling convulsively to carry a single grain of corn. His unavailing efforts were repeated sixty-nine times, and at each several time, so soon as he reached a certain point of projection, he fell back with his burthen, unable to surmount it. But the seventieth time he bore away the prize in triumph, and left the wondering hero re-animated and exulting in the hope of future victory. We don t know whether good Dr. Watts ever "improved" upon this story; but its recital has nerved many a heart to daring in the trying hour and prompted the resolve "not to give up the ship." No, in the voyage of life, when winds and waves assail our shattered bark, and enemies crowd around us, let us remember there is hope while one plank holds to another, and that it is unmanly weakness to "give up the ship."

ORIGIN OF THE NAME "GROG."—In Pulley's Etymological Companion will be found the following, in reference to the origin of this word: "Admiral Vernon (the same after whom Mount Vernon was named) was the first to require his men to drink their spirits mixed with water. In bad weather, he was in the habit of walking the deck in a rough *grogram* cloak, and thence had obtained the name of "Old Grog" in the service. This is the origin of the name applied to rum and water.

USE OF EXCITEMENT.—Intellect alone, however exalted, without strong feelings, without even irritable sensibility, would be only like an immense magazine of gunpowder, if there were no such element as fire in the natural world. A cold-blooded bookworm can never make an eloquent orator.

CHARITABLE.—Old Gripes has a way when any people call to solicit susscriptions for a charitable purpose to call out from the head of the staircase to his servant—"Don't let anybody in; you know the doctor says this small pox is catching." The applicants usually go away.

LONGEVITY.—There is in Duxbury, in this State, a family by the name of Drew, composed of two brothers and four sisters, whose united ages amount to 495, and the average of whose ages is 81 1 2, the oldest being 90.

LAMARTINE.—The subscriptions for this eminent writer's new serial work have come in so well that he is now in the receipt of $80,000. We hope he will take good care of this income.

GLORY.—Somebody says that glory consists in being shot in battle and having one's name reported wrong in the lists of killed and wounded. That is one kind of glory, to be sure.

JUST SO.—If you want to know the way to the penitentiary, follow the man who believes the world "owes him a living."

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"The Gipsey's Secret: or, The League of Guilt," a story of high and humble life, by the author of THE UNKNOWN.

"Florence Nightingale," verses by SARAH A. NORTAL.

"The Forgery," a tale by RICHARD CRANSHAW.

"The Unknown Artist," an incident in the life of Rubens, by H. S. SKIDE.

"Good Fortune," lines by ROLANTHE.

"Time sets all things right," a story by MARY A. LOWELL.

"Spenser's Faery Queen," its first recital, a sketch by JOHN D. PRESCOTT.

"The Awakening," stanzas by ELLEN ALICE MORLATTY.

"Life's Changes," a tale by ANNIE CLARK.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

View of the Entrance to the St. Nicholas Hotel, Broadway, New York

Scener illustrative of Newfoundland Cod Fishery: represented first, a fleet of large fishing vessels at their backs, fishing for Cod; second, a view of Deep Sea Fishing; third, Cod Fishing on Stead toward fourth, Splitting Cod with the Seine; and fifth, a station for Drying Fish.

A fine series of views, depicting localities contiguous to the White Mountains, and the process of travel thither, showing: first, the Carriage Road, Mount Washington; second, view of the Alpine House, Gorham, N. H.; third, the Daxville Notch; fourth the summit House, Mt. Washington; fifth, view of Portland; sixth the Crystal Cascade; seventh, view of Mounts Washington, Jefferson and Adams; eighth, a picture of White Mountains, from Randolph Hill; and ninth, a pretty view of Berlin Falls.

A fine portrait of Rev. Thomas Starr King, one of the most eloquent and popular clergymen of Boston.

A scene in Gardiner's Pass, at the Ascending Mont Blanc.

Pictures describing Church Architecture in Europe, giving a view of the Cathedral at Colodo; Exterior View and Interior View of the Cathedral of Messina, and a delineation of Street Architecture at Messina.

*** The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents per copy.

☞ One copy of THE FLAG and one copy of the PICTORIAL, when taken together, for $4 00.

Foreign Items.

A letter from Athens says that a conference of the three protecting powers is soon to be held in London to settle the affairs of Greece.

In France the appearance of the harvest is splendid and all fears of scarcity are dissipated. A protest of the Orleans princes is creating some interest.

There were lately 4996 petitions on the table of the British Commons House, praying opening the British Museum on Sundays, signed by 629,178 persons.

From forty to fifty of the Poles resident in Paris have availed themselves of the amnesty accorded by the emperor of Russia, and resolved to return to their country.

The whole number of marriages in England in the year 1855 was 159,727. Of this number 47,843 men, and 68,175 women, signed the marriage register with marks, being unable to write their own names.

The Spanish house of Bourbon renews its ancient relations with Bavaria, by giving one of its royal daughters to one of Bavaria's royal sons. In other words, Prince Albert is going to marry the Infanta Donna Amelia.

The Lord Mayor of London—Salomons, a Jew—recently gave an entertainment, at which was the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate of all England. And the metropolitan was supported by no fewer than ten of his suffragan bishops, besides a goodly fellowship of the clergy of London.

A new project is announced at Paris, under the title of the Anglo-French Com'y of the Champs Elysees, with a capital of one million sterling, which proposes to build upon, beautify, and lay out the Champs Elysees. New hotels, houses and villages will be built, and new streets and squares formed.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Frugality is founded on the principle that all riches have limits.

Splendid qualities break forth in dark times like lightning from a thunder cloud.

Freedom can alone be found in obedience to the laws of God and the just laws of man.

Mankind are split into companies, which follow their captains, but see little of their generals.

He who receives a good turn should never forget it; and he who does one should never remember it.

While we retain the power of rendering service, and conferring favors, we seldom experience ingratitude.

Watch two foes with all diligence—the enemy that stands without, and the traitor who opens the gate within.

It is with certain good qualities as with the senses; those who are entirely deprived of them can neither appreciate nor comprehend them.

Money and time are the heaviest burdens of life, and the unhappiest of all mortals are those who have more of either than they know how to use.

The natural life of nations, as well as of individuals, has its fixed course and term. It springs forth, grows up, reaches its maturity, decays, perishes.

The rules to form a young man are to talk little, to hear much, to reflect alone upon what has passed in company, to distrust one's own opinions, and value others that deserve it.

Joker's Budget.

A phrenologist has gone to examine the head of navigation.

It is an extraordinary fact that when people come to what is commonly called *high words*, they generally use *low language*.

A poor Irishwoman, who was afraid of her intemperate husband, declared that he feared he would commit suicide on her.

"Sam, how do you like that knife I sold you last week?" "So, so. It's not so very sharp; yet you managed to shave me with it."

A woman has sent a very brief letter to a member of Congress from Massachusetts. It reads as follows: "Baisam's ass onve spoke—can't you?"

An acquaintance of ours is such a prominent partizan of Turkey, that he actually introduced oak chairs in his kitchen, and turned out the rush'uns.

We learn toleration from children; for no man can have his whiskers pulled by a young brat, without feeling what an intolerable nuisance he must have been as a child himself.

The following notice appeared on the west end of a country meeting house: "Any person sticking bills against this church will be prosecuted according to law, *or any other nuisance.*"

"Mr. D.," observed Mr. B., in a recent trial, "practises his arguments before a glass." "Better practise them before a glass than *after a glass*," was the courteous retort of the able lawyer.

Dr. Cousin having heard the famous T. Fuller repeat verses on a scolding wife, was so delighted with them as to request a copy; but Fuller told him "a copy was needless, as he had the original."

Quill and Scissors.

William W. Fream, a native of New York city, and formerly assistant alderman, shot himself dead on Sunday week, at his residence in Lewis Street. He had been out of employment since November, and was destitute. A few weeks ago he proposed to his wife to commit suicide, but she said they must live so take care of their three little children. The deceased was a kind husband and father.

The meteorological correspondent of the Newburyport Herald gives the following facts: "The total amount of rain during the year ending July 1, 1856, forty-four inches and thirty two hundredths of an inch; which is more than four inches above the usual average for that place."

The Post-Office Department has purchased for a post-office in Philadelphia, the grounds and building of the Pennsylvania Bank, in Second Street, for the sum of $250,000. The ground is an extensive lot, and the building one of the finest architectural ornaments of the city.

J. B Daines of London has obtained a patent for a cement which protects walls from damp. It consists of eight parts of oil to one part of flour sulphur—which, by being heated to two hundred and seventy degrees, unite. The cement is applied by means of a brush.

Scotch bread is made thus: Rub three-quarters of a pound of good, fresh butter with one pound of flour, to which add spice and as much sugar as is liked, and, without using any liquid, put it in tins to bake, with pieces of citron, caraway, comforts, etc., on the top.

Notices have been given of intended applications to the legislature of Pennsylvania for new bank charters, together representing a capital of $18,830,000—or a sum nearly equal to the whole of the present banking capital of the State.

Col. E. J. Young, who laid a wager of $500 that he could row a boat from Philadelphia to Cape May and back within four days, accomplished the distance (200 miles) in 1 hour and 43 minutes less than the required time.

Of the ninety-one counties in Indiana the inhabitants of eighty can leave home in the morning, go to Indianapolis by railroad, attend to business there from two to eight hours, and return home the same evening.

Throughout all parts of Upper Canada the crops are said to be looking remarkably well. The weather has been mild, rather than hot, and has contributed to their growth and present healthy condition.

Samuel Keter's little son was killed by lightning, while sitting in the door of his house in Roanoke, N. C., between a young man and a young woman, neither of whom was seriously injured.

A new passage, two miles in length, has been discovered in the Mammoth Cave, Kentucky. It leads to chambers far surpassing all formerly known, and it is believed still greater discoveries will result.

The *Espero* of Turin states that the Austrians are actively preparing for war in Italy, and that the work of fortifying Mantua, Milan, Verona and Pavia is being pushed on with the greatest activity.

In the region of Wheeling, Va., the farmers hardly know how to get in the immense quantity of hay which lies before them, and much will be left uncut for want of laborers.

The Poole murder will, it is estimated, cost New York city something like $100,000. The cost of summoning extra jurors on the attempt to bring on the second trial was $2000.

A German chemist in New York, says the American Medical Monthly, has made the discovery of a process by which a large proportion of iodine can be dissolved in water.

In the towns of Haverhill, Burton and Piermont, N. H., wolves are quite numerous, and are doing extensive damage to flocks of sheep and to young cattle.

There are now on the criminal docket of the First District Court in New Orleans, not less than fifteen cases of murder.

The small stream that runs through Amherst and empties into the Souhegan River, was called by the Indians, *Quahquinapasaksesumwagog.*

In Walpole, N. Y., a lad named Smith, firing at a mark, had the misfortune to shoot his elder brother dead.

The Russians are fitting out an immigrating fleet at Cronstadt for the river Amoor.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr Coolidge, Mr. Joshua D. Ball to Miss Emily A. Cole.

By Rev. Mr. Twombly, Mr. John Harman to Miss Mary White.

By Rev. Mr. Skinner, Mr. J. Wesley Crowell to Miss Annie M. Olds.

By Rev. Dr. Bennett, Francis H. Krebs, M. D., to Miss Helen Elizabeth Curtis

By Rev. Mr. Olney, Mr. Nathan C. Benton to Miss Sophronia M. Moore.

By Rev. Dr. Kirk, Mr. David Simpson to Miss Maria Bell.

At East Boston, by Rev. Mr. Wallace, Mr. Bamford Rogers to Miss Julia Berry.

At Lynn, by Rev. Mr Smith, Mr. Joseph Bachelier to Miss Martha Jane Woodman.

At Saugus, by Rev. Mr Brigham, Mr. Samuel Green, of Lynn, to Mrs. Maria Tower.

At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Cole, Mr. Thomas Gole, of Chicago, Ill., to Miss Annie W. B. Tree

At Gloucester, by Rev. Mr. Parmenter, Mr. William B. Clark to Miss Elizabeth W. Marr.

At Lowell, by Rev Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Charles M. Currier to Miss Kate Perril

At Taunton, by Rev. Mr. Maltby, Mr. George H Cook to Miss Sarah D. Hall, both of Raynham

At Pittsfield, by rev. Dr. Porter, Mr. Daniel Bolto to Miss Louisa Phillips.

At Salisbury Mills, by Rev. Mr. Byram, Mr. Foster Gale to Miss Hannah Wilson.

At Portsmouth, N. H., Mr. Charles W. Kidney to Miss Lydia S. Natter.

Deaths.

In this city, Mr. Charles Waterman, 55; Mrs Martha G. Tucker, 51; Miss Charlotte B. Chittenden, 18.

At Charlestown, Widow Elizabeth Leverett

At West Cambridge, Mr. George Frazier 62.

At North Chelsea, Mrs. Sarah B., wife of Capt. Cornelius Ellis.

At Cambridgeport, Mrs. Caroline E. Jameson, 34

At Dorchester, Mrs. Sarah Brooks Bird, 86

At Waltham, Mrs Celia Ann, wife of Rev. M. L. Hedford 47.

At Lynn, Miss Annie M. Steele, of Portland, 28; Mrs. Alice F. Foster 33; Mr. Matthew F. Hawkes, 25

At Salem, Mr. Francis H. Lefavour 63; Widow Mary Smith 84.

At Danvers, Mrs. Nancy B. Batchelder, 83.

At Beverly, Mr. Edward Stone 74

At Marblehead, Miss Mary O. Lovel, 23

At Dedham, Mrs Eliza Jane Chandler, 34.

At Newburyport, Mr. Alfred A. Parton 37; Miss Elizabeth F. Currier, 67; Widow Fanny G. Coolidge, 62.

At Newton, former Mrs Susan E. Fowler, 39

At East Abington, Mr. George L. Thompson, 56.

At Worcester, Miss Mary K. Flagg, 21.

At New Bedford, Mrs Sarah C., wife of Mr. Henry Wadsworth, 51.

At North Dartmouth, Mrs Sarah Jane Rounser, 22.

At Northampton, Mrs. Fanny E. Thayer, 32.

At Edgartown, Mrs Fanny S., wife of Rev. James M. Worcester, of Norwich, Conn. 29.

At Springfield, Mrs. Harriet K. Childs, 28.

At Natchitoches La., Mrs Ann Maria, widow of the late Dr. Henry D. Wakefield, formerly of this city, 52.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

TO ELMIRA.

BY PONINOS.

Elmira—the star of my glory,
I gaze like a lover on thee;
For I know that there dwells in thy bosom,
The light of thine own love for me.

When the shadows grow deeper and deeper,
I walk not alone, but I know
That still there art with me in spirit,
And will be wherever I go.

Oftimes when the evening is passing
Most silently over this sphere,
As I sit by the musical Byram,
Thy loved voice comes unto mine ear;

And I know as I sit thus a-musing,
As still as a sleep-conquered dove,
That our souls though apart hold communion,
Through the spiritual medium of love.

Elmira—the star of my being,
There's a power divine in thy kiss;
For it gives to my glad soul a sunshine,
And illumines existence with bliss.

May thy love from me never be taken,
Though time brings its changes and strife;
May thy smiles ever brighten my pathway,
Elmira, the star of my life.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE HEART'S RESOLVE.

A SCOTTISH STORY FROM LIFE.

BY OPHELIA M. CLOUTMAN.

On the banks of the beautiful Clyde was the home of Jeanie Grahame; the sole idol of aged parents and the pride of the entire hamlet. In all Scotland, the eye could not have sought a more lovely resting-place than upon the charming Scottish hut, whose latticed windows were nearly screened from observation by the thick-spreading ivy, overrunning in many places the low flat roof.

But in truth, the loveliest feature of our Highland picture was none other than Jeanie herself. Her eyes of liquid blue contrasted most beautifully with her own rose-tinted complexion and wealth of golden ringlets. Arrayed in a closely-fitting kirtle of blue, which served only to set off to advantage her somewhat slight and girlish figure, one might have thought her the noble descendant of the unfortunate Queen of Scots, rather than the humble peasant girl she was.

On the opposite bank of the river rose to sight the old ancestral castle of the once illustrious Montaine family. But two members of that distinguished line of royalists now survived; the young Lord of Montaine, who had seen some twenty-five summers, and his sister, Lady Montaine, some two or three years his junior. A most imposing appearance this fine old castle presented by moonlight, with its gloomy looking front of massive granite, and its spacious court-yard. Then, too, it was situated far distant from any other royal residence of the kind, and being on a slight elevation of land, leading up from the river, it seemed like a giant tower frowning upon the low and vine-clad huts of the surrounding peasantry.

The parents of Jeanie Grahame were the tenants of the Lord Montaine; and they of course looked up to their land-holder with the same awe and reverence that the meanest subject of royalty looks up to its Supreme Ruler. As for the young lord, but little that is commendable can be said of him, save that by his generosity and good humor he had won the hearts of a greater part of his tenants. During the winter season, he spent most of his time in Edinburgh, where he indulged in a continual round of gaiety and dissipation, so that for at least six months of the year, his sister was left sole mistress of the ancestral abode. This lady was exceedingly aristocratic, and prided herself greatly upon her noble birth and family; and there was about her manner a degree of haughtiness and reserve which chilled even the warm heart of "fair Jeanie" (as the peasantry termed her) whenever she was sent, as was frequently the case, on an errand to the castle.

At the time of which I write, Jeanie had just entered upon her eighteenth year, and though merry and blithesome as a lark, she was never mirthful to excess; and there was something in the high brow and finely chiselled mouth which bespoke firmness and determination far beyond her years.

I have said that Jeanie was the idol of her parents; and well might that aged pair have cherished her tenderly, for death, that untimely destroyer, had snatched from their grasp child after child, until none but little Jeanie was left to them. She was so kind and gentle—an ever ministering angel to their wants and comfort—that one who did but once look upon her could not fail to love her. In short, she was ever a general favorite with both old and young; and if the Scottish lasses sometimes envied her the beauty she possessed, and the admiration she excited from the other sex, they could not but feel within their hearts that it was all richly deserved.

But of the crowd of admirers that followed in her train, there was but one on whom the fair maiden bestowed more than ordinary marks of favor. And this was Donald McAlland, the son of a near neighbor, and likewise one of the tenantry. To many this unassuming youth would have offered but slight attraction, for he was not rich, nor even well-to-do, in the world's goods and chattels; nor was he particularly fair in person.

Many wondered what there was in him Jeanie saw and admired; and there was some jealousy manifested by the Scottish lads when on any little festive occasion, at which Jeanie was always the acknowledged belle, she permitted him to be her chevalier and escort. The parents on both sides could not fail to notice the daily growing intimacy of the youthful pair, which was fast ripening into love. And I need not say that for a time the matter was highly approved of by the old people.

There were times, however, when Mrs. Grahame would say with a sigh, as she beheld the youthful pair strolling arm-in-arm through the fields, "It's a pity Jeanie was not born a queen"—so ambitious is a mother's love! And then she too would wonder that one who had ever been idolized and cherished from her earliest infancy could look with favor upon one who seemed so much her inferior.

She did not know that Jeanie had discovered beauty far beneath the surface which *her* eye had failed to discern. Yes, Donald was the happy possessor of as noble a soul and as manly a heart as were ever implanted in the breast of mankind! And Jeanie loved him for his sound mind, his generous heart and noble energy of purpose, rather than for any outward charm he possessed. He did not flatter or seek to dazzle her eyes with the sordid gold of the world; for of wealth he had but little—and of flattery, still less. No, it was for *himself* alone that she lavished upon him her sweetest smiles, and tuned her heart in harmony with his.

And Donald, plain and honest heart, the envy of his sex, and the fortunate possessor of Jeanie's best affections, how did he love her? With the whole strength of his noble nature; he worshipped her as the pagan does the saint, in sculptured niches. Yes, she alone was the god of his idolatry. And yet in her presence he could not but feel reserve at times, for it seemed to him that she was lifted far above him in all that was beautiful and truthful; his superior in intellect and mind as well as in person. The days and weeks passed swiftly by to those two loving hearts; for as yet no cloud had interposed to darken with its shadow the sunshine of their happy hearts.

It was quite early in the fall when the carriage of Lady Montaine drew up before the humble cot of Robert Grahame. All were not a little surprised at seeing so unexpected a visitor, who hastily descended from the carriage and prepared to enter the house. Old Mrs. Grahame dropped her knitting and hastened to open the door, for she knew that it must be some important matter that could thus call abroad the lady of Montaine Castle at so early an hour in the morning; for when the young lord was home, he was ever wont to come himself on affairs of business.

With an air of aristocratic dignity, she coldly took the proffered chair from which Jeanie had just risen, and proceeded at once to communicate her errand.

"I have come, Mrs. Grahame," she said, "to obtain the loan of your daughter for my dressing-maid and companion. Unexpected business has called my brother to the city much earlier than usual; and as he intends passing the winter in town, as is his custom, I am determined never again to pass so lonely a winter as that of last year. The castle is so large and gloomy that without the aid of society it is enough to give one a settled melancholy, if not to make them a confirmed misanthrope."

"Has the young lord gone so soon?" asked Jeanie. "Why, it was but yester-morn that I saw him talking with my father near the bridge which spans the river."

"Yes, and it is to my brother's suggestion that you owe the honor of this visit," said the lady, with a toss of her fine oval head. "He has eulogized so much the beauty and charms of Jeanie Grahame that I have thought best to make *you* the above proposition."

Jeanie blushed deeply at the cold flattery of the last remark, and a shade of anxiousness passed over her face as she awaited her mother's reply to the proffered offer.

"For how long a time would you require her services?" asked Mrs. Grahame; "for she is very dear to us, and is the sunlight of our home."

"I should like, if possible, to have her come at once, and remain during the winter months, if agreeable to herself," she said.

"I will go, but with one condition," said the girl; "which is, that I may be allowed to return home at nightfall; for it would grieve my heart to feel that I was entirely isolated from my dear parents, and shut up, as it were, in the depths of yonder dreary castle."

Just then she caught her mother's reproachful glance, and feeling that she had spoken too hastily, she said, with a low curtsy, as Lady Montaine rose to depart:

"I will consider the matter, and bring you word on the morrow."

It was of course a source of regret to Jeanie to leave parents and home; for it was the first time that she had ever thought of absenting herself from them, even for a single day. And then, too, she would be deprived of Donald's sweet society, in a great degree; but she could in part compromise the matter if the favor of returning home at night should be allowed her. And so after much thought and long talking upon the subject, it was decided that Jeanie should go to the castle in the capacity of lady's maid.

The morrow found Jeanie at the castle gate; not in her usual high spirits, however, for she dreaded the thought of seclusion within its pillared halls and Gothic chambers, into which the sun's rays seemed never to penetrate. The Lady Montaine received her with more than customary graciousness; and her proposal of returning home nightly was willingly acceded to by her.

Donald, too, felt not a little downhearted at the idea of even so trivial a separation from his heart's idol. But Jeanie playfully bantered him upon his lack of gaiety, and bade him not wear so long and puritanical a face on the occasion of her going so short a distance, and for so short a season.

"What would you say, Donald, if the broad ocean were to separate us," she said, "instead of the river banks? Then indeed might each heart have cause for grief"

Alas! she little knew then that those words, so thoughtlessly spoken, were prophetic of what the future was soon to bring forth.

Jeanie Grahame was soon established in her new quarters, and as she had determined to make the best of her condition for the time being, she soon entered upon her duties with earnestness and zest.

After all, there was much within that old building which well accorded with her tastes and feelings; for Jeanie was at times not a little thoughtful, and she often loved to indulge herself in day-dreams of the olden times when "brave knights and fair ladies" mingled with pleasure in the animated sports of the chase, and the too often dangerous joust or tournament.

Her time was spent mainly in the boudoir and apartments of her mistress, who being somewhat fond of retirement, was never so happy and contented as when listening to the glowing eloquence of Jeanie's words, as clearly and beautifully she read aloud to her the thrilling romances of the olden time; or poured forth in one continual burst of melody the Scottish ballads of the immortal Burns. She saw but little company at the castle; for as the winter crept on, the city friends began to fall off; and if perchance an occasional visit was made by a friend, the reception was always attended with so much formality and ceremony that Jeanie had no desire to become a participant in its cold enjoyments. As the severity of the weather increased, Jeanie found it impossible to make such frequent visits to her home, and with the sweet society of her books and flowers, and the daily correspondence of Donald, she became quite content and happy in the once gloomy old castle.

The Lady Montaine herself became conscious of a growing attachment for the fair maiden, whose society and intercourse had become so indispensable to her happiness. But it was evident to Jeanie that there were still certain bounds of propriety and etiquette which even then she might not overstep; for there was at times a chilling and freezing reserve manifest in the presence of her mistress, which seemed to check and restrain for the time any sudden gush or burst of feeling which her loving nature might betray or exhibit.

It was early on one cold, frosty morning in December, while performing her lady's toilet, that the porter handed to Jeanie a slip of paper, on which was written in a hurried hand the following words:

"Come down to the court-yard, my own dear Jeanie; for I have sad news to communicate.

"DONALD."

Hastily excusing herself, she descended with a beating heart and trembling limbs to the court-yard; for as she had not been home for more than a week, she was fearful that something had transpired there, the disclosure of which was entrusted to Donald's care.

Her first glance at the anxious and troubled countenance of her lover only served to confirm her fears. In vain she tried to speak, but her very tongue seemed cleaving to her mouth. With a sudden effort she gasped "My mother!" and but for the strong and manly arm of Donald she would have fallen powerless to the earth.

"Calm yourself," said the devoted youth, as trembling and agitated he folded her to his breast. "All—all is well at home!"

These words seemed to revive her instantaneously, and placing in her hands a newly opened letter, Donald bade her a hasty adieu; for he could not bear to witness the effect which the words there penned would have upon his loved Jeanie. Already he felt his heart-strings giving way, and quickly he turned from the spot.

Quickly those eyes of deepest blue scanned the burning lines before her, which were from a rich uncle of Donald's—a Scotch quaker, who had long since emigrated to the New World, and was at that time President of Philadelphia. Having accumulated an immense fortune by great industry and thrift in the mercantile trade of that city, he proposed to relinquish his business to his favorite nephew, Donald. And as he was a steadfast bachelor of long standing, he would of course become his sole heir at his death; for he had no near relatives in the New World.

For a few moments Jeanie stood like one transfixed to the spot; then carefully folding the letter and placing it in her breast, she ascended to her lady's dressing-room, apparently as composed as if nothing unusual had occurred. But when once escaped from the society of her mistress, she threw herself upon her couch and wept bitter tears at the thought of entire separation from her lover. And then hope would regain the mastery in her heart; for surely Donald could not think for a moment of leaving home and her for so uncertain and hazardous an adventure, and at such an unpropitious season of the year, when old ocean seemed ever frowning upon the traveller, and tossed the ship upon its surface madly about, as if it were but a mere bauble in the air.

That evening Jeanie despatched a note to Donald, for him to meet her at her father's home; which interview was willingly granted. It now became Donald's turn to struggle with self, and keep up his hitherto unfailing courage.

"Jeanie," he said, with composure, "I have not decided upon the course to pursue, without having first given the matter serious and weighty consideration. 'Tis true I may not tell you how much and deeply I shall regret leaving those dear parents of whom I have so long been the stay and comfort, and whose days seem fast waning; but I am satisfied that it is my duty to go, though my heart be crushed and my spirits bowed down at the thought of leaving all that is dearest on earth behind me. I am poor, and have parents dependent upon me for their daily support and maintenance; shall I then, my own Jeanie, let pass unheeded so bright an opening as that which the future spreads before me?"

He paused for a reply; but as he got none, he continued:

"If I stay here, I may not hope even for wealth; for living under such a system of government, I see not how I can ever rise to be other than the servile tool of the proud and wealthy landholder. No, Jeanie, I will go to America,' and his eye flashed strong determination as he spoke; "there I will toil until death, if it must be, to secure for you, my betrothed, a home of affluence and ease, and a station in society befitting your pure and intellectual soul. There no one will deem the beautiful and accomplished wife of Donald McAllan the once lowly peasant girl—the serving-maid of the haughty Lady Montaine." And the excited youth spoke with a tone of dignity more fitting a king than a serf.

"Go, then," said Jeanie, smiling through her tears, "and may God's blessing follow and prosper you; for your pleading eloquence has changed my heart, and I can meekly bear my portion of the sacrifice which must indeed be made."

"Since duty prompts, the sooner you leave, Donald, the better it will be for both," she said, as with a kiss of sacred love upon her pale brow, the youthful lover bade her "good night" at the castle gate. "You remember, Donald, my idle words a few weeks since—' what if oceans divide us, instead of the river banks?'"

"I do. Alas! how strangely true and prophetic!" he said, as he turned to retrace his steps homeward.

The time for Donald's departure was soon fixed; and with many pledges of eternal fidelity the lovers parted for months—years—perchance forever!

Time flew by, and with the approach of spring, Jeanie anticipated with joy her coming release, but still the Lady Montaine held her prisoner. So very essential had she become to her naturally dull household that she had half a mind to adopt her as her own child; or rather make her the protege of the high-born and wealthy mistress of Montaine Castle; but to this she knew the aged parents would never consent, while living.

"My brother will soon be here," said Lady Montaine, one morning, entering her boudoir, and addressing Jeanie, who was busily engaged upon a piece of delicate needlework; "for here is his letter, which says 'you may expect me in two weeks; when I expect to see my sweet little Jeanie duly installed as one of the household.'"

At these words Jeanie Grahame's blood boiled within her. How dare he call her so familiarly his "sweet little Jeanie?" "No," thought she, "I will no longer stay at the castle to be made the subject of his rude jests and undue familiarity." And then she told the Lady Montaine of her anxiety to return home, so long had she been absent. To this the lady would not hear at first, but Jeanie's strong will triumphed; and she made her preparations to return home within the space of ten days.

"Thus," thought she, "I will elude his grasp, heartless fop as he is!" For rumor had brought strange reports of the young lord's extravagance at the capital, as well, too, of his entire lack of morality.

On the morning previous to Jeanie Grahame's proposed departure for home, she arose very early; for she wished, as it were, to take farewell of all the scenes, both in nature and art, which for the last few months had been so dear to her heart. After passing through the conservatory, where even the flowers reposed with folded petals and drooping heads, as if not yet awakened from their sleep, she passed out into the spacious court-yard, where all was still and silent; for at that early hour not one of the inmates of the castle were stirring. She had but just gained the centre of the court-yard, when the sound of approaching wheels arrested her attention, and ere she could divine their import, a loud knock at the gate startled the porter from his slumbers in the lodge. In one moment the master and lord of Montaine Castle stood before her.

Approaching her quickly, he said, "Thus do I kiss the dew from off thy leaves, sweet flower," as bending low, he placed upon her damask cheek a rude kiss.

"Sir!" said Jeanie, drawing up her graceful form to its utmost height, "your boldness is unpardonable."

"My dear Jeanie," he said, very sarcastically, "words cannot express the joy of this unexpected morning surprise and welcome."

"You flatter yourself greatly, Lord Montaine, if you think my appearance in the court-yard was otherwise than accidental," said Jeanie, coldly; "for I believe your sister did not expect you for some days yet."

"I doubt it not," the young lord said, in a most gracious tone; "but really, I am very happy at the thought of having such a bright and charming companion as yourself to help beguile the dull monotony of rural life. But laying aside all flattery, Jeanie, I must tell you that I have not seen in all Edinburgh so fair a face and fine a form as yours."

"I assure you, Lord Montaine, that your heartless flattery is quite uncalled for and unheeded, as I trust that the morrow's setting sun will find me re-established and once again in my own home."

"Not so soon, my little maid!" said the imperturbable lord, following the maiden into the hall.

"I will at once arouse your sister," said the new provoked and insulted Jeanie, as she sprang up the broad stairway. "She will doubtless give you a most *cordial* welcome."

The following day Jeanie prepared for her return home: and although her mistress was still unwilling to part with so cheerful a companion, no inducement that was offered could make her remain longer. As she was about to depart, the young lord stepped forth, and, politely handing her into the coach, begged leave to accompany her home; but with a haughty bow, she declined his *kindly* offer.

Never were parents so happy as old Mr. and Mrs. Grahame were at their child's return; and never seemed that lovely home one half so bright and beautiful to Jeanie's admiring eyes as on the morning after her arrival. Bright and beautiful seemed the dawning future to that young heart; for she had received a letter from Donald, assuring her of his safe arrival and the brilliant prospects in store for him.

She was skilfully engaged in twining a wreath of laurels, interspersed with fine white flowers, and warbling with her bird-like throat that sweetest of Scottish songs, "Mary of Argyle," when a gentle rap at the door announced the presence of a visitor. She lifted the latch, and started as she again beheld Lord Montaine; but he, with a low bow, respectfully asked for Mrs. Grahame—though, in truth, Jeanie herself was the magnet which had drawn him to that humble hut. She, glad of a chance to escape, quickly ran to call her mother; nor did she again appear until after the young lord had taken his departure.

Day after day was the lord of Montaine Castle a visitor at the hut of Robert Grahame, and in looks and actions strove to win the heart of the beautiful maid to himself. The rarest of flowers were daily sent her from the conservatory, and fair jewels were his proffered gifts, thinking thereby to dazzle and attract her eye. But to all his protestations of love she turned a deaf ear, much to the annoyance of her mother, who felt not a little vexed at her entire refusal of his suit. In vain she told the lord that her heart and hand were long since given to another; and not even the wealth of the mines of Golconda could cause her to relinquish her deep and holy love for Donald.

"Out of sight, out of mind," he would say to her; "and if prosperous, Donald would more likely forget his old love, and take to himself a bride of high birth and station in America; and then, when it was too late—she deserted and rejected—would regret having refused his noble offer."

Thus to accuse Donald of such injustice and cruelty was more than Jeanie's sensitive nature could bear; and with the well-aimed arrow still rankling in her breast, she bade him leave her presence forevermore, nor seek to taunt her with his insolent proposals.

Of Lord Montaine's offer and constant addresses, Jeanie informed her lover in her letters to him; and but for the implicit faith and confidence which Donald reposed in Jeanie, he would have had much cause for alarm.

A year passed by, and still the Lord Montaine lingered in his castle, and not even the amusements of Edinburgh could offer him any attraction. 'Tis true he loved the beautiful Scottish maid with all the ardor and affection of which his soul was capable; but it availed nothing! Wealth and position could not buy the heart and hand of the constant and faithful Jeanie.

Vainly her mother strove to coax and induce her daughter to yield her consent to marry the young lord, as she placed before her eyes the heavy silks and jeweled caskets, which were the unnoticed gifts of Lord Montaine. But no! the jewels of her heart far outvalued in purity and beauty the snowy pearls within the silver casket.

"Take them and him forever from my sight!" she cried; "for nought on earth can dissuade me from my purpose—to marry Donald!"

Ah! woman's faith, more greatly art thou to be desired than all the wealth of India, or the gems of the ocean depths!

Two years from the time that Donald left home and native land, his feet pressed once again the shores of his much-loved Scotland. Towards the home of his birth the young man first directed his steps; and there an unexpected surprise awaited him, for Jeanie had known of his coming, and had kindly gone over to assist Mrs. McAllan in arranging some little luxuries for the comfort of the traveller. And there she was, the same dear Jeanie as of old, save that time had only served to ripen and mature those charms of person which were but the external covering of greater beauty within.

Now that Donald had indeed prospered, and was become the sole heir of his uncle's extensive property (whose decease took place a year after Donald left for America), the old folks could not of course do otherwise than give their consent to the speedy union of the devoted pair. At the end of one short week the rustic church of the little hamlet was the scene of a lovely and imposing ceremony—the union of Donald and Jeanie.

Beautiful looked the bride in her snowy robe of muslin, and her veil of delicate lace falling about her like a fine mist, fastened upon her golden curls only by a wreath of myrtle. And Lord Montaine was there to congratulate the too happy bride; for deeply as he had felt the sting of her refusal, still he could not find in his heart to dislike Jeanie—though, it must be said, he envied not a little Donald McAllan his lovely prize. And even Lady Montaine seemed to have lost somewhat of her native coldness in the warm and heartfelt pressure of the hand she gave to Jeanie.

It was Donald's intention to have taken the parents of both himself and Jeanie to America with them; but old Mr. and Mrs. Grahame declared themselves much too old to undertake so long a journey to the New World; for, to their weak and dimmed eyes, heaven seemed nearer to the view! So Donald was to provide for them a more comfortable home in their own loved Scotland.

The happy wedding party, consisting of Donald and his charming bride, together with Mr. and Mrs. McAllan, the aged parents of the former, were soon on their way to the city of Philadelphia, where a beautiful home was awaiting them, resplendent with all the luxury that wealth could procure, and over which the beautiful Jeanie McAllan is now the presiding genius.

NAPPING IN CHURCH.

The following "course of sprouts" is said to have been adopted by the Puritans to prevent disorder or sleeping in church:

A man was appointed to keep people from sleeping by means of a short, chubbed stick, having at one end a knob, and at the other a foxtail, with which he would stroke the women's faces that were asleep, and would knock surely dogs and men. Two men were appointed to mark down the attendants in order to present them to the magistrates, while at the same time three constables were appointed to keep watch at the doors of the meeting-house to prevent any one from going forth till the exercises were finished.—*Salem Gazette.*

THE BEST TIME TO FRET.

Two gardeners had their crops of peas killed by the frost, one of whom, who had fretted greatly and grumbled at his loss, visiting his neighbor some time after, was astonished to see another fine crop growing, and inquired how it could be.

"These are what I sowed while you were fretting," was the reply.

"Why, don't you ever fret?"

"Yes, but I put it off till I have repaired the mischief."

"Why, then, there's no need to fret at all."

"True, that's the reason I put it off."—*Saturday Evening Post.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

A YARN IN THE LONG BOAT.

BY FREDERICK W. SAUNDERS.

"All the starbowlines a-ho oy! eight bells. Tumble up! tumble up, lads, and eat your lodgings while you have a slant!" roared a thundering voice at the forecastle scuttle, rousing the starboard watch from their forenoon slumbers, which they were enjoying with more than usual satisfaction, having been engaged in a spirited reefing-match all the previous night.

"What's the weather, matey?" asked my watchmate, Joe Grummet, in a sleepy tone, as he slowly poked his legs out of the forward hammock and began lazily coaxing them into a pair of man-of-war ducks.

"Weather, is it?" returned the voice from the scuttle. "Wal, it's cleared off cloudy, and we'll have a dry shower after a bit. It stands you chaps in to look sharp, or you'll lose yer grub, for it will be all hands to house to'gallant masts inside of a week, to my thinking."

"What is it for dinner, Spikes?" queried a hungry youngster, preparing himself for a trip to the galley.

"Wal, young man, no account," continued the voice. "For the first course you'll probably have nothing, by way of a change; the same for the second course; and for desert your old favorite, stewed catharping legs cooked in tar."

The boy, grumbling and growling at the propensity of the "ables" to be "allers a chaffin' of him," made his way up the companion-ladder, and soon returned with a huge kid of salt horse and a bucket of biscuit, whereupon each man valiantly drawing his sheath-knife, the deck was speedily cleared of the enemy.

Dinner being completed, the next move on board every well regulated ship is to light the pipes and have at least two whiffs, before one bell gives the signal for turning to; but we were not destined to enjoy that luxury. Scarcely had the first mash been scraped against the cover of a chest, when the voice of the chief mate roared through the scuttle to the tune of "All hands send down to'gallant masts and furl the fo'sail."

Tumbling on deck, we found that the gale of the night before had completely subsided—what little air there was stirring being like paddy's hurricane, right up and down; but the horizon all about us had a particularly ugly look, giving promise of a snorter at no very distant period. For the next hour, all hands were busily enough employed running aloft, reefing mast ropes, swaying and lowering until the fore, main and mizzen topgallant masts and yards were safely deposited on deck, the foresail rolled snug in its gaskets, and nothing showing above the eyes of the topmast rigging.

We had scarcely executed these precautionary measures, before the gale came down upon us with a howl, striking us flat aback and deluging the deck with spray. The old boat staggered and keeled over almost on to her beam ends before the first fury of the blast; but righting herself with a shake, we managed, with a good deal of bracing and boxing about, to get her on the wind, where, being a light tea-loaded craft, she lay like a duck rising and falling on top of the waves, with her nose within six points of old Boreas's bellows nozzle. Our vessel not being officered by that description of "web feet" that usually command the "old barns of Nookers" hailing from down east by cast, on board of which they keep the hands twisting foxes, or making spun yarn until thirty seconds before she goes down or pitches on to a lee shore, there was nothing for us to do but make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would admit.

In pursuance of this laudable design, we—meaning the able seamen, or "shell-backs," as the present generation of packet sailors delight to call themselves—having stationed the boys on deck to pass the word of command, if any should be given, proceeded to stow ourselves away in the covered long boat, where, sheltered from the spray and wind, we might light our pipes and luxuriate generally.

"I say, chaps," suddenly exclaimed an old wharf rat, who, having got his pipe fairly under way and seated himself upon a soft fender, had been for some minutes laboriously spelling in a half audible voice the words which he slowly traced with his great anchor stock of a fore finger across the columns of a dingy newspaper of the mature age of three years; "I say, chaps, whatever is this here gun cotton they blow so much about?"

"Why, bless your innocent heart! don't you know?" returned Tom Piper the boatswain, with an extensive grin. "It's a kind of cotton that grows in the island of *Gun*-ey, from which it takes its name, as well as from the fact that it makes the up top wadding for the canons of the church."

"That be blowed for a twister!" rejoined the seeker after knowledge with a contemptuous air. "You'd best calk up, Tom Piper, and not expose your ignorance. What *you* don't know would fill a book bigger than the 'pitome. But I say, Grummet, what is the stuff, any way? You know more than anybody else in the world, or pretend to, though there's one gentleman rope-hauler that's 'incredible on that pint,' as the cook says when you tell him there's wool in the lobskouse."

"Why," returned Joe, assuming a dignified air, as is customary with him when appealed to for his opinion, "this here gun cotton, d'ye mind, is a kind of stuff, you know, that's used for—for—that's used, d'ye see—" Joe, evidently at a loss in what manner to express himself, paused to discharge a mouthful of tobacco juice in among the naked toes of a youngster, who had crawled up on to the booms abreast of the opening in the waist of the long boat to hear what was going on. "This here gun cotton, d'ye understand," he resumed, seeing that the eyes of the entire watch were fixed inquiringly upon him; "this here stuff is just—is nothing more nor less than—than—why, some of you chaps have seen it, haint you?"

"Never!" they all responded, with a grin of delight at finding Joe taken aback.

"Why, it's simple enough," he continued, evidently perplexed beyond measure; "it's just the simplest thing in nature. The stuff, d'ye mind, is nothing more nor less, as I said afore, than just gun cotton, and that's all about it."

"Why, do tell us!" exclaimed Tom Piper, in feigned astonishment. "What a thing it is to have larning, to be sure! Some of you sea lawyers set that right down in your log books, so's to be sure not to forget it."

"I s'pose you think I don't know what it is?" exclaimed Joe, angrily.

"Now just look a' that, mariners!" vociferated Piper. "D'ye ever hear tell of anything so wonderful? Besides all the rest of his knowledge and larning, he's a fortin-teller too, and knows what a chap is thinking about by just looking at his figure-head."

Joe was highly indignant at the peculiar style of conversation adopted by Piper, and making a strenuous effort to vindicate his reputation as a man of extensive general information, he succeeded, by taking an entirely new point of departure, after a good deal of circumlocutory backing and filling, in conveying a tolerably correct idea of the way in which gun cotton was made, and its use after being made.

"But," he continued more good naturedly, as he began to perceive himself regaining the ground he had lost, "cotton is not the only thing that can be prepared in the same way and used for the same purpose. Half a dozen sheets of paper, rigged out to go off like gunpowder, was the occasion of my drifting about for a couple of years all over the East Indies to no purpose, and coming within the twinkling of a topsail sheet block of getting my neck stretched out like a giraffe, with a hemp cravat slung to a Java Dutch gallows."

"Go in, lemons!" interrupted Piper encouragingly, stretching himself out on a heap of spare sails. "Heave ahead with your twister. I'd as soon listen to a lie from you as from any other hawser laid, skysail ranger."

"The way of it was just here," continued Joe, without heeding the interruption. "About the time the stuff was first invented, I was laying in the port of Hong Kong, in the ship Starvation, Captain Blueblazes, rigged by the parish and provisioned on charity."

"By the tail of Mahommed's big black bull terrier, I've sailed in that clipper the biggest part of the time since I was christened," ejaculated one of the watch with energy.

"And I!" "And I!" exclaimed the others.

"O yes, you may bet your whiskers on that, and no fear of losing your mane either," broke in Piper. "There was never that amphibious yet that ever twirled a marlin-spike, or had been on the drink as long as the old woman's son, who took a barrel of salt to Turk's Island as a venture, to swap off for tamarinds, orangines, lemerines and allfired great kegs of molasses, and who had been gone just three long days come day after to-morrow, but would swear under oath—yes, under a number of oaths—that he had been shipmates with that craft."

"Look a here, Tom Piper," said Joe, fiercely. "Just you haul taut and belay that jaw tackle of your'n, will yer? or your slack braced wit may carry away your brains in the slings."

"O, heave ahead, heave ahead, my dandy! Don't be such a lubber as to get alarmed because you happen to strike soundings."

"No fear of my hair turning gray with fright from any of the no-sailor soundings that come from you, my bold dog. But let me see—where was I?"

"I don't wonder you forget," responded Piper with a grin. "It's an old saying that a certain class of people need to have excellent memories. But go on, go on—don't shorten sail, or you may slip your wind."

Without paying any attention to this speech, further than to slightly elevate his proboscis, Joe proceeded:

"O yes, I have it. I was lying at Hong Kong—"

"Not the slightest doubt of that, Joe, and in my humble opinion, you've been *lieing* ever since you left there, and before too, for that matter."

"Look a here, Tom Piper!" shouted Joe, springing from his seat in a fury. "D'ye know what it is to have your head caved in?"

"No, I don't—and I never was shipmate with but one man who I think could do that trifling job, and that chap is Joe Grummet," he returned good humoredly; for although Piper loved a joke as well as the next man, he was nevertheless a prime good fellow at bottom—and top too, not to favor one section at the expense of another, as is the custom with some politicians.

Considerably mollified by the compliment, Joe resumed his seat and his temper, and took up his pipe and the thread of his discourse.

"Well, as I was saying, we had laid at the port of Hong Kong some considerable time, and I was getting heartily sick of the old boat. Blueblazes was a regular drunken old tyrant, who kept the slip in continual hot water, and nothing but squabbling, swearing and fighting was going on from morning till night. I should have left the vessel long before, but for the fear of being some time out of employ, for ships were scarce and sailors plentiful at the time, so that the chances for getting another craft were extremely slim. It happened one afternoon—the captain being on shore—that we knocked off work and cleared up the decks quite early, and having nothing better to do, I went over into a bumboat that had come alongside and made fast to our fore chains.

"Among numberless other curiosities, the bumboat woman had a lot of this explosive paper, which tickled me exceedingly, it being the first thing of the kind I had ever seen; so returning on board, I forthwith appropriated enough ship's biscuit to pay for half a dozen sheets, which I stowed away in my chest for future use. It was my anchor watch that night from twelve till one, during which time the captain came off from the shore, noisy an'l quarrelsome, and with his skin about as full of poor liquor as it could well hold. With some little difficulty, I managed to hoist him on deck, lug him into the cabin, and tumble him into his berth, where he lay helpless on his back, shouting, swearing, and vainly endeavoring to get up for the purpose—as he said—of getting his pistols to shoot me. He soon fell asleep, however, and I resumed my pacing round the deck, to see that the ship didn't fall overboard. In the discharge of this important duty, half an hour passed away, by which time I began to feel decidedly sleepy, to have longing thoughts of my hammock, and to wish that I was snugly coiled away in the comfortable old dream-bag. So going softly into the cabin, to ascertain if it was not almost one o'clock, I was then and there struck with a bran new idea that at once rendered me as wide-awake as a New York pickpocket.

"Captain Blueblazes was a great and most industrious smoker. At no time, and upon no occasion, did he consider his pipe unseasonable. Indeed, it was scarcely ever out of his mouth; and I had repeatedly seen him asleep in bed with the pipe-stem clenched between his teeth. In order to have everything convenient for the gratification of this propensity, he had caused to be attached to the mizzen-mast, which was near the door of his state room, a small spirit-lamp constantly burning, a box of tobacco, and a tumbler containing papers of twisted paper, such as are seen on the mantel piece of almost any house. As my eye lighted upon these last, it occurred to me that some of my explosive paper, made up in the same form, would pass muster very well as the original tapers, and perhaps startle old Blueblazes a bit when he prepared for his morning smoke. Full of this idea, I went back to the forecastle, cut one of the sheets into slips and speedily twisted up fifteen or twenty very respectable tapers. With these in my hand, I forthwith returned to the cabin, abstracted the contents of the tumbler, and substituted my own manufactures in their place. So far, all was well enough; but in turning to go out, I stumbled over a piece of ill luck in the shape of a belt of canvass, and came down spat on the deck.

"'Who's that?' roared the captain, making an ineffectual effort to leap out of his berth. 'I see you, Joe Grummet, you bloody rascal! Wait till morning, and I'll set up your rigging for ye, my lad, with a taut lanyard.'

"It was now too late to undo my work, for the first mate, whose state room was directly opposite the captain's, was awakened by the noise, and would have observed me; so going back again to the forecastle and awakening the man whose watch it was, I turned into my hammock and snoozed away like a nigh policeman until four o'clock next morning, when the second dickey came forward to rouse all hands to wash decks.

"Buckets and brooms were now of course the order of the day, and as the head pump was out of order, it was necessary to draw the water over the side. I was the one that usually attended the whip, while the others passed the water and wielded the brooms. In order to more readily observe the result of my last night's mischief, I made fast the tail block for the whip to the main brace pennant, directly opposite one of the cabin windows, where I could overlook all that transpired within. It was nearly two bells before old Blueblazes exhibited any symptoms of turning out. At length, with a snort and a kick, he slowly swung his legs out of the berth, rubbed his eyes a minute, and going to the mast, deliberately filled his pipe and taking one of my tapers, applied it to the lamp. With a bright flash, it vanished from his grasp, and while with dilated eyes he stared with astonishment at the ends of his fingers, where the taper but a moment before had been, the entire bunch in the tumbler became by some means ignited, shooting a broad flame directly into his face, singing his hair and whiskers in a deplorable manner. I had not foreseen such a result as this; affairs began to wear a serious aspect. With a roar like a bull, the captain sprang for his pistols.

"'O you infernal villain—you bloody scoundrel, Joe Grummet you! I'll fix ye for this!' he yelled, as he placed caps upon the weapons.

"I was too well aware of the reckless character of this man to allow him to get hold of me until the first fury of his rage had abated; so dropping the bucket overboard, lanyard and all, I dove forward to the forecastle, and hastily divesting myself of the only two articles of wearing apparel I considered it necessary to wear in that climate, sprung from the bow and struck out vigorously for the shore. But I was not destined to reach it that trip. A quarter-boat was instantly lowered from the ship, and pulled by the officers—for the men would not touch an oar. I was speedily overtaken, fished up and conveyed on board, where, loaded with abuse from the captain—whom the first and second mates deprived of his pistols—I was heavily ironed and thrust into the lazarette, in which pleasant apartment, with no other clothing than the airy jacket and trowsers furnished me by that tight-fitting tailor, Nature, I had abundance of leisure to reflect upon my delightful predicament.

"Having cut up such a shine as that, it was of course for my interest to desert at the earliest possible moment, as I could look for nothing but ill usage and vengeance from the captain; but he took the best of fine care that I should have no opportunity for putting in practice anything of the kind. I was detained a close prisoner on board until the ship sailed, which event occurred about three weeks after the affair of the tapers, when, as there was no possibility of my getting away, I was allowed to return to my regular duty. The treatment I received, after getting to sea, wont bear thinking of. You all know the fate of a man, when the officers are "down on him."

"Our next port of destination, after leaving Hong Kong, was Batavia, where we arrived after five weeks beating down the China Sea, against the monsoon. Shortly after dropping anchor, we were visited by several Dutch officials in regard to some ship business. We were at the time busily employed cleaning and painting the ship, inside and out; and in order the more readily to perform this service for the forecastle, all our chests and hammocks had been brought up on deck. When the Dutchmen made their appearance on board, I was slung in a bowline over the bluff of the bow, painting one of the ports. Feeling an inclination to solace myself with a bit of the 'filthy weed,' I thrust my claws into my pockets and pulled out a couple of large handsful of nothing—a commodity with which I am generally pretty well supplied. So shinning up the bowline, I crawled inboard, to procure the desired refreshment.

"Seated upon my chest, I found a heavy Dutchman, talking with an unknown tongue in the German language to another heavy Dutchman seated upon another chest. With the utmost politeness of tone and manner that I could command, I requested him to slew himself a bit, so that I could come at what I wanted. With a scowl, as though I had taken an unwarrantable liberty in addressing him at all, he rose, and I proceeded to fish out from the bottom of the chest a day's allowance of tobacco. I had accumulated a good many traps of one kind and another, so that the old box was pretty well filled, and could only be closed by crowding. Upon the top of all, lay the five remaining sheets of explosive paper, together with some pipes and loose matches. Seeing the captain coming forward, I hastily dropped the lid and sprang on to the topgallant forecastle to go to my work—the Dutchman seating himself as before. I can only account for the occurrence that immediately ensued by supposing that when the Dutchman seated himself upon the chest, thereby crowding the cover down, sufficient friction was caused to ignite the matches, which communicated to the confounded paper; for scarcely had I reached the knight-heads when a tremendous explosion took place, and looking back, I had the melancholy satisfaction of seeing the Dutchman and the lid of my chest flying together in the air, at an elevation of some twelve or fifteen feet from the deck, while the forecastle was strewn with my unlucky traps and shattered fragments of the chest.

"'Murder, donder and blitzen!' roared the unfortunate representative of the Batavian government, as he came down spank on to the deck. 'That bloody assassin try to murder me, captain!' he exclaimed in a fury, pointing to me and rubbing his legs.

"'O you precious highbinder!' yelled old Blueblazes, with a grin of gratified malice. 'That's your game—is it? You want to blow up another man—don't you? We'll put a taut seizing on your pranks for the future, you son of a hangman's slip-noose!" and grabbing a short capstan bar, he fetched me such a clip on top of my brain-bucket as to drive all my senses clear down into my boots.

"I must have lain some time insensible, for when I again came to myself, I was laying on the grating at the gangway, with the irons on my waists, and a file of soldiers and an officer standing near me. So soon as I was able to stand upon my feet, they hustled me over the side into a boat, and pulled for the shore, upon reaching which I was marched, closely guarded by the soldiers, to the prison, shoved into a seven-by-nine cell, and the key turned upon me. All that day I was rather stupid and confused from the effects of the blow, and consequently troubled myself but little as to what was to be the upshot of the matter. Being conscious of having entertained no malice whatever, I had no idea that anything serious could come of it; but I was fated to be wofully undeceived in this particular.

"Bright and early next morning my cell door was unlocked, and a soldier entering, motioned me to follow him. Proceeding along a number of dimly lighted passages, we came at length to a large room where were assembled half a dozen stolid looking Dutch justices, old Blueblazes, the blown up official, and several other gentlemen whose principal employment seemed to be to look alternately at me and each other, shake their heads, and look at me again. The Dutchman was called upon for his testimony, which he gave at great length, but being in the Dutch language, I could not understand a word of it. It must, however, have been a very glowing account of the affair, for the judges evidently looked upon me as a monster of iniquity. Blueblazes next took the stand, and with a sardonic grin proceeded to give a detailed account of how the prisoner, while lying at the port of Hong Kong, had in the night time while he (the captain) was sleeping the sleep of innocence and fancied security, feloniously entered the cabin and deposited beneath his berth several kegs of gunpowder, with the evident design of blowing the ship and all that it contained into the air, but being interrupted by the awakening of himself and the mate, he (the prisoner) had delayed firing the train until the next morning, when providentially but a small portion became ignited; and although he himself had been seriously injured, he had, out of the mistaken kindness of his heart, forgiven me, hoping I would repent of my errors. But the affair of the previous day had convinced him that I was incorrigible, and a blood thirsty villain, whom the law would err in lightly punishing. He then gave his version of the Dutchman's affair, stating that while that respectable official was quietly seated upon the chest, I had approached, lighted a slow match, and hastily retreated to escape the terrific explosion that almost instantly ensued, and which was evidently intended to cause the official aforesaid to shuffle off his mortal coil with great and most unpleasant celerity.

"At this stage of the proceedings, I sprang to my feet, greatly excited, and denied 'under oath'—as Tom Piper says—the whole story. At a motion from one of the judges, I was immediately seized by the soldiers and forced back into my seat; but I still continued to use my lungs, and demanded to see the American consul. This could not well be refused me, and that gentleman being sent for, soon after made his appearance. But it is needless to tell chaps of your experience what satisfaction a sailor gets from an American consul, in a foreign port. Indeed, that consul would be considered as dangerously insane, who should take the part of a friendless sailor, against the captains and shipowners who support him, and whose influence continues him in office.

"The consul heard my statement of the case with a scowl of incredulity; then listened to the captain's story with a smile, said he had no doubt I was a great rascal, shook old Blueblazes by the hand, invited him to dine with him, and departed. Dutch justice is speedy in its course, particularly as regards sailors, jury trials being dispensed with as an unnecessary duty and expense. One of the judges rising from his seat, ordered me to stand up, which I did with a bounce. He then proceeded to inform me that, for having attempted the life of an official of the Batavian government, I was sentenced to thirteen years' hard labor in the chain gang. I was then conducted back to my cell and locked up for safe keeping.

"This cell was very small, with thick stone walls, and but one small grated window placed high above my reach. The suffocating heat of such a small apartment, under a tropical sun, was almost intolerable. My health soon began to suffer from the close confinement and bad air, my spirits became much depressed, and my mind was filled with gloomy imaginings. While in this condition, and when I had been imprisoned something more than three weeks, I was awakened about midnight, one night, from a sort of half slumber, by a sound as of some one knocking lightly or tapping against some part of my cell.

"'What's that?' I exclaimed, starting up and gazing about me, for the sound seemed to be inside the walls.

"There was nothing to be seen. I was about to lay down, when the sound came again, apparently directly over my head. Instantly the recollection of the spiritual rappings, of which I had heard so much, flashed into my mind, and I faltered, in trembling tones:

"'Are there any spirits present?'

"'*Tap, tap, tap*,' came the sound again, now in a different place.

"I assumed as firm a voice as I could command, and said in quite a loud tone:

"'If the spirit wishes to communicate with me, will it please make it manifest by giving three raps?'

"'Hold your tongue, you bloody fool, can't ye? and don't be rousing the guard,' responded a muffled voice, which was clearly outside the window.

"'Mighty civil kind of a spirit that! and if my harkers aint out of order, it's the ghost of Jack Brace, my old bunk mate,' said I to myself, speedily regaining my courage at the sound of a human voice.

"And hopping up on to a table that the cell contained, from the window I saw at a distance below several dark figures moving about among the rank tropical undergrowth, while one, with a long stick in his hand, was performing the part of a spirit by tapping the wall to attract my attention.

"'Who's there?' I asked, in a strong whisper.

"'It's your shipmates, you thundering old pelican. We've come to get you out, but the window is too high for us. D'ye think you could do anything to those bars, if you had the tools?' responded the voice.

"'Sartin,' I replied; 'pass up the instruments.'

"In a second, a three-cornered file came whizzing through the grating and struck into one of my cheeks—you can see the scar there now. It was no time to stop for trifles, however; so pulling it out, I mounted the little table abovementioned, and by which I could just reach the bars, and went to work with such a will that in twenty minutes one of the bars was removed, and I was on the ground with both ankles sprained by the fall. My shipmates had arranged everything. A boat was to start immediately for Manilla, on board of which I found my chest nicely patched up, with all my traps and a tarpaulin contribution of twenty dollars inside, and by sunrise, I was several miles at sea and out of the reach of old Blueblazes.

"I'd like to catch the old scoundrel on shore about ten minutes," continued Grummet, after a short pause.

"What would you do to him, Joe?" asked Tom Piper.

"Do to him?" responded Grummet, gritting his teeth and clenching his fists. "I'd treat him with kindness, so's to heap coals of fire on his head, and try if it wouldn't warm up his drunken old brains a bit."

The sound of eight bells striking, put an end to our yarn spinning and sent us aft to

"Call the watch, hold the reel,
Pump ship, and relieve the wheel."

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES TO OUR "EAGLE" AND "ANCHOR."

WRITTEN JULY FOURTH, 1856.

BY LIEUT. HOLM, U. S. N.

Hand-in-hand, in path of glory,
Noble youths, ye start so-day;
Marching to our patriot s story,
Fighting to our country's lay.

Though diverge the paths of glory,
Duty leads you on ;our way;
Yet the future 'll tell the story,
How you honor, fear, obey.

Think upon thy sire, O army!
Many a bloody Indian fray;
Wave that banner proudly, navy!
Wave the banner both obey.

Swear! upon the swords you cherish—
swear! the oaths you'll ne'er gainsay—
Each to fight, or nobly perish—
Both defend this glorious day!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

A GHOST STORY.

BY HARRY GRAHAM, M. D.

The class of a medical college, composed as it is of young men of all stations in society and of every condition in life, from the gentleman of wealth to the son of the poor man, who has felt a yearning after something better, higher, nobler than his father's lot, presents a varied and interesting field to the student of human nature. It is thoroughly democratic; each one is well met by his fellow, and the race is literally to the swift, the battle to the strong.

The reputation of medical students in general is by no means an enviable one—with too many it is the synonym of all that is to be dreaded or avoided. But his life is one of many temptations; he pursues a path by himself, cut off for a time from all sympathy with the world around him, with aim, objects and pleasures of his own which can be neither felt nor appreciated by others, confined for several hours each day to hard, uncomfortable benches, his mind constantly taxed to comprehend the various and complex subjects presented to him, worn out equally in mind and body, it is not strange he is desirous, as far as may be, to leave behind him all thoughts of care and physic.

Actuated by these feelings, he is ever ready for any mad-cap freak that may present, and becomes the fitting hero of many a fiction, whose only foundation is in the overwrought brain of some ambitious story-writer. But I am dealing in facts—actual occurrences—notes of which I made at the time—and only venture to embellish them so far as I may deem necessary to prevent a too general recognition, which might prove distasteful to the parties.

Soon after my matriculation at the —— University, accident threw me into close companionship with a fellow-student, named Harris. We took a room together in a house where there were but few other boarders, and applied ourselves vigorously to our studies, employing the time not spent in college in reading, quizzing and discussing topics of professional interest. The vexed questions of the existence of a protean compound, the nature of the vital force, the elements necessary to the production of the specific poison, malaria, and others of like character, were canvassed with warmth and mutual profit.

Harris possessed an inexhaustible fund of humor, and never permitted an opportunity for sport to pass unimproved, and I was always dragged into the service to assist, enjoy the fun, and bear the blame. Time and again did he urge me into participation in capital jokes, as he styled them, the result of detection in which would have probably been permission from the dean of our faculty to enroll our names as candidates for degrees upon the books of some other institution. The room adjoining us was occupied by three young men, two of whom were choice spirits, while the third was a quiet, peaceable, unoffending Irishman, who answered to the name of Sloan, and who served as our butt on all occasions.

Had any one done anything wrong, it must be Sloan. Did the landlady inquire as to the perpetrators of the noise the night previous, it was Sloan. Were our toilet articles *borrowed*, was the brandy taken, or cigars missing, a question as to their whereabouts elicited the instantaneous and unanimous reply, "Sloan did it." It mattered not what was done, or who did it—it was laid to Sloan.

The other two who occupied the room were, as I have said, fine fellows, and were named respectively, Wilson and Merryman, and joined us cordially in everything we started which prognosticated fun. We had become much attached to them, but our intimacy with Wilson was destined to be of short duration; for on returning from college at noon one day, we found he had been seized with something resembling cholera, and ere three o'clock he died. I was familiar with death in all its manifold shapes, but never before had I felt so keenly the uncertainty of life—never had I realized so keenly the truth—

> "There's not a flock however tended,
> But one dead lamb is there;
> There's not a hearth howe'er defended,
> But holds one vacant chair."

A sad group gathered about our tea-table that eve; for although Wilson had been a comparative stranger to us all—having come from the East only a few months before, and we were none of us particularly interested in him—yet the chair, now empty, which he had that morning occupied, tended to remind us that our turn might come next. As we left the table, the landlady inquired who would watch with the corpse that night. For a moment no one spoke, when I said:

"Harris and myself seldom retire before one or two o'clock, and as our room adjoins his, there will be no need of others until that time."

"I will cheerfully sit up all or part of the night," interposed Merryman; when Harris, nudging me, settled it by saying:

"You and Sloan, Mr. Merryman, will of course sleep in some other part of the house for to night. Harry here, and I will watch until about two, or until we get tired, when we will call you and Sloan, and you will then sit up with him."

Thus directly appealed to, Sloan gave an unwilling assent, and we repaired to our room and began an acenstomed review of the day's lectures. About eleven, my chum closed his book and remained for some time in deep thought, when he said:

"Harry, my boy, we will have some fun to-night at the expense of that Irishman, or I am not one of the humblest of the disciples of Momus and of Esculapius. I have always felt that it was the height of ingratitude, that it shows a want of appreciation, or an incapacity for enjoyment, to neglect to improve to the utmost everything which comes in our way, no matter whether sent by chance or a mysterious Providence—we will discuss that point at some future time. Now such a chance for a capital joke we may not have soon again, and I am going to improve it—I am. Irishmen are superstitious; Sloan is an Irishman, *ergo* Sloan is superstitious. Well, if we do not make him believe Sloan has once more returned to earth, call me Tom Harris no more. I will go and find him, and send him here, and do you sound him on the ghost subject for a time; then find some excuse—sudden illness, or most anything—so as to leave him alone a short time, and join me in the little room over the hall, where I will explain further. Do you take?"

I gave the desired assent, and he departed to summon the victim.

Some may feel inclined to shudder, and talk of the depravity of the rising generation, at the very idea of our attempting a practical joke in the room adjoining a corpse—that corpse the remains of an acquaintance, and that joke nothing less than a personation of his ghost. But please remember, kind reader, that students are in daily, almost hourly contact with the so-called monster, and it is particularly true of death, that "familiarity breeds contempt."

In a short time Sloan entered and seated himself in the chair by the open window, and gazed out upon the street in moody silence. For a time I pretended to study, then throwing aside my book, I said:

"It's no use, I am too nuwell to study to-night. I hope Merryman will come in soon. But what's the matter, Sloan? Are you sick, too? You look pale!"

"Do I? I am not sick, but I do not like this sitting up all night. I am not used to it."

"It is not pleasant, but we may die sometime, and need some one to watch by our bodies after the spirit has fled. Do you believe in ghosts, Mr. Sloan?"

"Hush!" said he, glancing fearfully toward the open door; "don't mention them!"

A silence of some minutes followed, when pretending a fresh attack of pain, I said:

"I must have some brandy. I will be back in a few moments; sit still."

"Alone?"

"Yes; you are not afraid?"

"No, not afraid—O, no, but—but—can't you wait?"

"No—I must have some; will be back soon." And without allowing him an opportunity to reply, I darted from the room and down the stairs. Hastily withdrawing my boots, I returned by the door again on tiptoe to the room where Harris awaited me.

A broad ledge ran along under the window, and with a bay-water bottle in his hand, Harris stepped out upon this ledge, and holding fast by the blinds, crept along until he reached the room in which lay the body. Here seating himself in the open window, he proceeded to coax from the bottle a series of the most melancholy sounds imaginable, interspersing them at intervals with audible groans.

When this had lasted for some time, I drew on my boots and hastened to Sloan. Never shall I forget his appearance. He was standing in the middle of the room, with his eyes fixed upon the open door through which the sounds proceeded, with his hands clasped, as pale as the ghost he expected, trembling in every limb, the very personification of fear. I paused by the door, and for an instant there was a struggle in my breast between pity and contempt—the latter predominated, and I determined to "put him through." Just then came another blast from the bay water bottle. Sloan seized me by the collar, and ejaculated in a whisper: "For Heaven's sake, Doc! what is that?" I hesitated for a moment, and the door burst open, and Harris, turning a complete somerset, lit upon his feet directly in front of us. His appearance, and sudden, unexpected, unusual and unceremonious mode of entrance, were calculated to shock even stronger nerves than our victim possessed.

He was habited in his shirt only, while his usually smooth hair was combed until it stood "like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

"Hark!" said he, in a hoarse whisper, "did ye not hear it?"

"No," I answered, in the same tone, "twas but the wind, or the car rattling o'er the stony street!"

"No such thing!" indignantly said Sloan. "I tell you 'twas a ghost!"

"Just my opinion," answered Harris. "But what's to be done?"

"Can't always tell," I ventured; "things are so mixed."

"I am going to leave," said Sloan.

"You will not go alone?" said I.

"Alone! why you don't mean to say you are going to stay, do you, after what you've heard to-night?"

"Some one must stay; but you can go. Harris and I will remain, for it may not come again."

"O, yes it will! Lord, what shall I do?"

Here a new idea struck him, and piously crossing himself, he fell on his knees by the bedside, and murmured, "Now I lay me down to sleep—" He paused; it was evident that this was the only prayer he could now remember, and he had either forgotten the rest of this, or had recollected it was not very applicable to the present occasion.

Harris, never at a loss, instantly prompted him, "All crumpled in a little heap." Why don't you go on, Sloan?"

He began again:

> "Now I lay me down to sleep,
> All crumpled in a little heap;
> If I die before I wake—"

Another pause.

"I hope the Lord will lay me straight," suggested Harris; and the poor fellow repeated it, and got up evidently relieved.

"Now," said he, "if you follows are a mind to stay here, why stay; but I would not stay in the house another minute for the city." And he bolted down stairs and into the street at a two-forty speed.

Harris and myself were too much amused to think of sleeping that night, and when we descended to breakfast, we were not surprised to see a pile of trunks, belonging to Sloan, in the hall. He left, and not for months after did he discover the joke—when, fortunately, Harris and I had left the city. Now he sometimes tells the story never forgetting to heartily curse those "half made doctors."

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

FRED GASKET:

—OR—

THE DUEL AT SEA.

BY RALPH TRYON.

I had been before the mast for several years, when I was offered the berth of second mate on board a fine ship bound for New Orleans. The captain was personally unknown to me, but he had the name of being a rough customer with his men, and his officers seldom made more than one voyage with him. However, I was too well pleased with the idea of getting out of the forecastle, to think of hesitating for a moment.

It was in the summer season, and it was hard to procure both officers and men for the voyage, on account of the anticipated sickness upon our arrival; and to this cause, I no doubt owed my present capacity as second officer. Atlength we were ready for sea, after I had performed unusual duties, for the mate had only come on board the day before. The steamer came alongside, and shortly after the captain appeared on the wharf with his papers under his arm.

He was dressed in his best shore rig, and carried a small walking-stick in his hand. A regular storm seemed gathering on his brow, which soon gave us all a touch of its fury. The rigger caught it first, who had just finished bending the sails, and whom he cursed most lustily for his tardiness. He raved at the stevedore because the ship was a little by the head, and then at the owners for allowing her to be loaded so deeply. He blowed the shipping-master into ribbons for having brought the crew aboard drunk, and then he cursed the weather because the wind happened to be east, which would prevent his working out of the harbor.

When everything was clear and the ship only hanging by a single line, two men jumped over the bow and ran up the wharf. The captain ordered me to pursue them and bring them back. After a long chase, I secured one, but the other cut completely clear of me. The captain swore that he would not go to sea without his full complement of men, and the ship was accordingly towed a little way into the stream and anchored. The next morning the man was found in the police lock-up, and when he was brought on board, I was completely taken aback when I saw that the captain did not give him a word, nor even a frown. The owner's son, who was going down the harbor with us, noticed this, and asked him how he took it so coolly. He ground his teeth with suppressed rage, as he hissed out:

"I'll give that man enough when I get outside of the light."

And he was as good as his word, for both of these men bore the marks of his brutality for the rest of the voyage. I became much attached to the mate, who was as good a sailor as ever put his foot on a ship's deck. He was a strong-built, noble-looking fellow, with an eye like a hawk, a great favorite with the men and as great an aversion of the captain's, who took delight in insulting him, even before the men; but the brave fellow bore it all with a silent scorn, which caused the Tartar almost to madness, and cut him more deeply than angry reply could have done.

Fred Gasket had been liberally educated, but against the wishes of his friends had chosen the seas for his home. A gentle sadness seemed to have settled upon him, which made his nature almost womanish, while at the same time he was perfectly reckless of danger. As I became more intimate with him, he gave me a portion of his history. It was the old tale—love, foul weather, wrecked hopes and foundered happiness.

He had met a beautiful girl at Mobile—the daughter of a wealthy planter. The acquaintance ripened into mutual love, but when Gasket, in a manly, honorable manner, explained their position to her father, he was treated with contempt and the doors of the house closed upon him. They met occavionally, notwithstanding, and afterward managed to correspond together. The father saw that the grief was killing his daughter, yet his iron will showed no signs of relenting.

Fred had just returned from a voyage, when a letter from her informed him that she was ill and suffering. He was almost in despair. Then, several days afterward, he received a very stiff and formal letter from her father, stating that his daughter was very ill and requested to see him, adding that the past would be overlooked, and that he was willing to disappoint his own hopes to secure her happiness.

Off he started, travelling day and night without rest, as fast as the mail could carry him; but when he arrived, his worst fears were realized, for several days afterward, she died in his arms—constant as a sheet-anchor in her affection to the last. It is no wonder that he hung out signals of distress, but strange that he could manage to keep afloat with all this weight of grief bearing down upon him.

One day one of the men before alluded to fell sick, no doubt from the ill usage he had received, and was reported accordingly.

"Mr. Gasket, order him aft and I will doctor him," said the captain, with a malignant grin.

He then ordered a can of coffee from the galley, into which he put two large spoonsful of salts, and when the man came aft, bade him drink it. The poor fellow gulped it down with out a murmur.

"Now, you soldiering rascal, go to your bunk, and if I don't find you on duty to morrow morning, I'll give you a dose to cure you."

Of course, the man was very ill all night and so weak in the morning that he could not stand upon his pins. But the captain was on the look-out for him, and when he found he was not on duty, again ordered him aft. Gasket took no notice of the order.

"The man is really sick, sir, and I do not think able to get out of his bunk," I ventured to say.

"Who made you spokesman?" he replied, sharply. "But since some officers do not seem to understand their duty"—here he scowled at Fred—"I tell you to seder the man aft."

Of course, it was my duty to obey. Poor Jack crawled on deck, and steadying himself as well as he was able, made his way to the captain.

"Now, my fine fellow, since you are determined not to be useful, I am going to see if I can't make you ornamental—in plain words, I am going to make a spread eagle of you. Mr. Gasket, seize this man up."

The mate did not stir.

"Did you hear me? Seize that man up, I say."

Fred stood as immovable as the mainmast.

"You sneaking, chicken-hearted, mutinous dog, I'll break you and put you in irons for the rest of the voyage, if you dare to disobey my orders."

"Are you addressing your conversation to me, sir?" coolly asked Fred.

"Yes I am, and I want you to understand it."

"I only understand the language of gentlemen," retorted the other.

"Ha! you bandy words with me! But will you, or will you not obey my orders, sir!"

"If you wish to make a service boatswain of me, I most distinctly decline."

"Very well, sir. I understand you now, and have a few words to say to you in the cabin," hissed the captain, almost livid with rage; "and your presence may also be necessary," he added, turning to me. "As for you," he said, addressing poor Jack, "go forward and thank your lucky stars that I have not flayed the skin from your back."

How this breeze was to end, was more than I could imagine. However, we went into the cabin, where Fred calmly seated himself at the table, while the captain plunged into his stateroom and in a moment returned with a small mahogany case, containing his pistols, and took his seat opposite.

"After what has been said," he began, "the ship is not large enough to hold both of us. I now waive all official superiority and talk as man to man. You have insulted me, sir, in the presence of the crew, and I now demand satisfaction. Either you must retract your words upon the quarter-deck, or you must fight me, sir. Do I speak plainly now?"

"Captain Hamper," said the mate, "you are insane to make such a proposition."

"Nevertheless I have made it, and will abide by it."

"You know, sir, if you had ordered anything within the bounds of reason, that I would have obeyed, even at the risk of my life."

"Will you fight?"

"I would rather not."

"Then you are the cowardly sneak that I took you to be."

"Beware, Captain Hamper," said Fred, turning pale with anger; "do not tempt me too far."

"I will have this dalliance no longer. You shall fight, or I will shoot you down for a mutinous dog, as you are."

"Enough, enough," cried Fred; "your folly be upon your own head. Mr. Gray," said he, turning to me, "you will bear witness that I am forced to this."

"And Mr. Gray," said the captain, "have the kindness to load those pistols with equal charges, for I suppose that Mr. Gasket will choose those, since we have nothing else; and now, sir, how will you fight?"

"As you've said,with pistols, here and at once."

"Here!" echoed the captain; "why, we have not room."

"I claim the privilege of the challenged party to name the time, place and mode," said Fred, coolly, and continued: "I name the time, now; the place, here; the mode, as we sit here at the table—and Mr. Gray shall give the signal."

The eye of the captain quailed as it encountered the steady, unflinching glance of Fred, and his face turned to a deathly pallor as he sat perfectly mute with fear and astonishment.

"I don t understand fighting in this kind of way," he mumbled out.

"it is my way, sir!" thundered the mate; "and you must fight, or retract, or I shall chastise you for a coward."

"I shall never forget the despairing, agonizing and crest fallen look of the captain, as he stammered forth the apology, and I could not help being impressed with the fact of how triumphantly a noble nature, like Gasket's, soars above the blustering bravado of one who is but a coward at heart.

As for the captain, he took his humiliation so much to heart, that he was scarcely seen outside his state-room during the remainder of the voyage. Fred left the ship at New Orleans, and I was offered his berth, no doubt as a bid for my silence concerning the duel. I returned in the ship and had not the slightest difficulty with the captain, nor did the crew have reason to complain of him.

Fred some time afterwards in a letter informed me that he was with the old planter, who ought to have been his father-in law, at whose entreaty he had promised to quit the sea and remain with him. Several years afterward, the old gentleman died and made Fred some reparation for the past, by bequeathing to him a large share of his estate.

Jester's Picnic.

A rollicking Hibernian, of the Light Division, in the Peninsular, was once leisurely trudging along the road with a pig in a sling behi d him, when, as bad luck would have it, he was overtaken by General Crauford. The situation, as may be supposed, was not the most genial.

"Where did you steal that pig you plunder ing rascal?"

"What pig, general!" exclaimed the culprit, turning round to him with an air of the most innocent surprise

"Why, that pig you have got behind you, you villain."

"Well, then, I vow and protest, general," repeated Pat, nothing abashed, and turning round to his four footed companion, as if he had never seen him before, "it is scandalous to think what a wicked world we live in, and how ready folks are to take away an honest boy's character. Poms blackguard, wanting to get me into trouble, has tied that baste to my cartouch box."

In one of the rural districts, a small grocery store bears the following inscription:

> "Hot coffee tea, ginger and spruce beer
> pies donute biled Egs pigs feet
> and sarsiges sold here
> Also fresh and skimed milke
> warmsted pare with no water
> Broken glas and Chaos talkn in
> to parte pave
> No ardent lick her kept hear"

A friend of the late Dr. Maginn, dining with him, was praising the fine flavor of his wine, and begged to be informed of the merchant's name.

"O, I get it from the London Tavern, a house close by, just as I happen to want it," replied the host

"Indeed," said the other, "a capital cellar unquestionably; but have you not to pay a rather extravagant price for it?"

"I don't know—I don't know," returned the doctor; "I believe they put down something in a book."

A lawyer, lately pleading in a sheriff court, in a case of right of way, thus addressed the bench:

"My lord, the road in question is of no use whatever; indeed, it is rather a nuisance, as it is only frequented by backguard boys and profligate young men and women. I know the road."

Sheriff—You have walked the road?

Lawyer—A hundred times

Sheriff—You give yourself a bad character.

Rev. Mr. Stiggins, a crabbed old fellow, once said:

"I am a charitable man, and think every one entitled to his opinion—and never cherish malice against my foes, not even against Mr Mulberry, who has t directly called me a sinner; but still, if the sky has a thun derbolt to spare, I think it would be well bestowed upon Brother Mulberry s head."

Fam Stick, in his quaint, humorous way, says:

"The little folks be the bigger they talk. You never saw a small man that didn't wear high-heeled boots and a high crowned hat, and that was not ready to fight almost any one to show that he was a man every inch of him — while the big men are generally of a kind and generous disposition."

A lady who gave herself great airs of importance on being introduced to a gentleman for the first time, said, with marta ecol indifference, "I think, sir, I have met you somewhere?"

"Very likely," replied the gentleman, with equal nonchalance, "you may, ma'am, as I have been there very often."

A painter, who was fond of hearing his works praised, was one day told that Judge —— did not think very favorably of a certain performance of his.

"O," said the artist to his informant, "what is his opinion good for?—he isn't a judge of painting—he is a *Judge of Probate!*"

The following notice is posted conspicuously in a publication office out West:

"Shut this door—and as soon as you have done talking on business, serve your mouth the same way."

Bores wouldn't do a slow thing to cut this out and paste it in their hats.

At the close of a teachers' Institute down east, the principal of the academy in M. being requested to make a few remarks, rose and spoke as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen,—In the language of—(hesitating)—I forget what his name was—(still hesitating)—and also what he said."

Smithers says he always travels with a "sulkey"—that is, he always goes with his wife, who continue to talk incessate and out of humor from the time they leave home till they get where they are going to. The only time she ever smiled, he says, was when he broke his ankle.

When you see two young ladies on such terms of intimacy as to walk with their arms around each other's waists, you may be certain that there is no love wasted between them. If you want to try, take either of them aside and praise the other.

"Well, Charley, what have you been learning to-day?"

"Rheumatics, gran'ma; and I can tell you such a dodge! If I was to put you under a glass receiver, and exhaust the air, all your crinkles would come out as smooth as gran' pa's head."

At an elegant private ball, lately, a rather doubtful apology was received from a gentleman, stating as a reason for his non-attendance, that he had unfortunately sprained his ankle. A lady in the company immediately observed that it was a *lame excuse.*

"Hullo! I say, what did you say your medicine would cure?"

"O, it'll cure everything—heal anything."

"Well I'll take a bottle; maybe it'll heel my boots—they need it bad enough."

"What heading shall I put to this account of a man cutting off his toe with an axe?" asked a young paragraph peaser for a certain newspaper office.

"What heading, sir? Why, melancholy accident,' to be sure."

Two sweeps in the street—one sweep to the other.—"Parties! I shot quite sick a greenhorn as to go to parties in leap year. Why, you'd be engaged, and the banns put up, afore yer knowed which gal it was as had nabbed yer."

Muggins said the other day, in reference to the cold weather and ice in the rivers, that he did not see the use of it in the winter months; but he thought they would prove a perfect luxury in July and August.

Charitable Lady—So you say your mother is very sick? *Beggar Boy*—She is that! She need to keep a peanut stand once, but she took in a bad one dollar bill and failed.

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